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THE WORLD OF ROERICH

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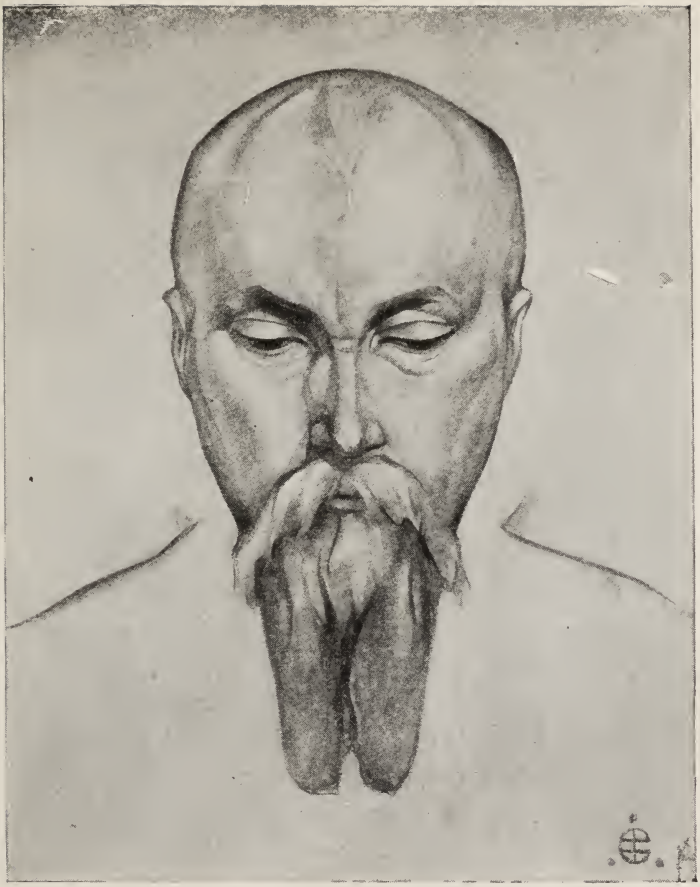

NICHOLAS ROERICH

by Sviatoslav Roerich

1923

PREFACE

This book is an attempt to interpret the art of Nikolai K. Roerich as well as to tell the main facts in the story of his life, because his life and his art are inseparable.

The departure of the Russian painter for India has brought to a close a definite period of his work (1). Therefore a survey of what Roerich had accomplished up to the present day seemed opportune. A further reason prompted the writing of this book — In March of 1924 a Museum of Roerich's works will be opened in New York. It will stand as a monument to the artist's earnest hope for a closer spiritual relationship between Russia and America.

(1) Nikolai Roerich and his family sailed for India on the 17th of November 1923.

CHAPTER I

On the Eastern borders of the « New Earth » in the Arctic Ocean stands « Mount Roerich », so-called by the Russian Polar explorer Sedov. And we infallibly think of the three cardinal points in the whole of the Master's creative work : New Earth, East and Mount, those three symbols which are the source of the Master's inspiration.

The world in which Nikolai Konstantinovitch Roerich lives is a different world from that of other men, — so different that when we glimpse it in the paintings of this Russian artist we forget our everyday surroundings in a desire to know more of it. It is a beautiful and wise world where the painter's fancy touches spiritual truth; a world whose main feature is unity — unity of subject matter and spiritual insight; a world in which every image is apprehended as the creative symbol of a higher reality.

It is a world where a constant inflow of themes arises from that state of spiritual and aesthetic perception in which the artist dwells continually and from the necessity of expressing an inexhaustible supply of conceptions full of inspiring novelty. All the peculiarities of Roerich's painting are determined by the essential character of the visions in whose sphere they are conceived.

It is a world whose most markedly original and individual feature is its coloring. In this world the painter — clairvoyant sees the infini-

tely varied spectacle of life illumined by some strange celestial radiance. This magic glow brightening the images of the artist, more from within than without, imparts to them a fairy- like, phantom character. It is a world whose distinctive colors are borrowed principally from the depths of the evening sky or the heavens before dawn or the mysterious northen region of the midnight sun.

It is a world in which owing to his color schemes, all that the artist portrays seems to lie at a distance, to be withdrawn towards the far-off horizon, freed of details and thus revealing the essential outlines and inner meaning. And like the coloring, the basic lines of Roerich's compositions, in full harmony with it, tend to be resolved in distance, in expanse.

It is a world of countless images and prophetic parables where the stones and the clouds speak; where one glimpses the ancient mystery of the spirit communing with other planes; where high reality and myth are intermingled with a visionary interpretation of old Slavons life or legends of the saints; where nature is deified and the painter is at one with the ancients; where old church painting is interpreted from a modern point of view and is enhanced by it; where fervent love for the past of Russia has developed into a love and understanding of all humanity and narrow nationalism has broadened into universality.

It is a world in which the highest achievement of the painter is the sense of ocean-like infinity — the product of his remarkable and profound conception of the universe. His inner vision serves as a guiding principle for the creation of a mood of grave silence, a peace characteristic of church paintings. In this world the artist not only avoids too great pretence and medley in colors, but also — and too a greater degree — he avoids the bustle of movement. The pictures in which he is most true to himself stand out in a harmonious simplicity of outline.

The original force of Roerich's work consists in a masterly and marked symmetry and a definite rhythm like the melody of an epic song. The essential peace of his visions remains undisturbed, and the lines and colors supplement each other in such a way as to merge

marvelously into one whole. This creative unity is not a chance result of fortunate influences; it is the ripe fruit of inner experience. It is not simply a beautiful display of fancy, but a profound and imperative self-expression. Roerich's art is not merely an endeavor to represent objects; it is in itself an event, an act of revelation.

« Yes, it exists this beautiful world, this realm of Roerich of which he is the sole tzar and ruler. Though charted in no maps, it is real and exists no less than the province of Orel or the kingdom of Spain. And as people journey to foreign lands one may journey thither, later to narrate at length of its riches, of its skies, clouds and prayers. There are dawns and sunsets, different from ours but not less magnificent. There are life and death, saints and warriors, peace and war, there are even conflagrations with their monstrous reflection on the distraught clouds. There are seas and skiffs... no, not our sea and not our skiffs : our terrestrial geography knows no such wise and deep sea, with rocks on its banks that are like the tables of the testament. There they know much, there they see deep; in the silence of the earth and of the skies there sound words of divine revelation. And in a moment of distraction one may, in one's mortal way, envy the man Roerich who sits on a high bluff and sees — sees ! such a beautiful world, a world wise, metamorphosed, translucently brilliant and reconciled, sublimated to the heights of superhuman eyes... » (1)

But this world reflected in Roerich's paintings is only one means of proclaiming Beauty and its unity. These constitute the sole purpose in the life of the painter who is a priest at the altar of art.

From early youth Roerich has been writing — in a peculiar and original style — on various subjects : epic songs and fairy — tales; fantastic stories and poems; impressions of nature, hunting, and archeological researches; articles on art and architecture; and lately on cosmic subjects. All these serve one purpose — the revelation of Beauty and its influence in our everyday life.

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(1) « The Realm of Roerich » by Leonid Andreyev, « New Republic », December 1921.

The written word is interchanged with the spoken one. Roerich makes countless communications and reports, gives lectures and talks, again hailing Beauty and foreseeing the coming of a new world.

« A new world is coming » says the artist in one of his more recent lectures, « In this new world, in its new temples a new life will be established in which art and knowledge will support the throne of Divine Love. Amidst the monstrous mental accumulation of obsolete frippery, signs of a synthesis and of the harmony of perfection are becoming visible. Learning the future significance of beauty and wisdom men will understand also the paths of their creation... Art is for all. The gates of the sacred source, I insist, must be wide open for everybody..... And the light of art will influence numerous hearts with a new love..... Great is the significance of art for the life of the future..... because the question of art has now become the most vital factor of life..... »

Beside his great understanding of Beauty and its effects upon the world, Roerich has within him the great understanding of the unifying truths of all faiths which together with the reign of Beauty will establish upon earth eternal peace and the brothehood of man.

This underlying purpose can be traced throughout his whole life. It has induced Roerich, a born leader and organizer to take part in many societies. Until the Revolution he stands at the head of one of the most representative schools of art in Russia; in all offices he strives for progress and growth and attains it. He collaborates with architects, musicians, theatrical and ballet producers. He preaches the importance of preserving monuments of the past and assembles valuable collections of paintings and of relics of the Stone Age. In America he founded three institutions to further the ideals of united arts.

In all his activities Roerich is not a dreamer; on the contrary, he sees and feels his purpose and straightforward follows it, without deviation, without needless words or gestures. He knows where he goes and he knows when the time has come to take possession of what is his by right. His vision is so clear that he seems to stand on

top of a hill and from there to survey the future. This unifying strength of purpose, together with his impartiality inevitably makes people strive always to have his friendship and guidance. His actions and his judgment bear no traces of anything personal. Every page of his life is an open book to the whole world.

Absorbed in his world and in all the activities connected with his work, Roerich nevertheless is not a detached or absent minded person in the contacts of daily life. On the contrary, he always keeps in touch with what is going on in the world; is always interested in the work of others and glad to help whenever he can; he is very considerate and thoughtful, simple and affable in manner. He has a sharp sense of humor and keen observation and looks out on the world through kindly, smiling, slightly quizzical light blue eyes. He does not speak much, but always to the point and his words often give food for thought for many days to come. He is endowed with calm wisdom, strong logic, reserve and great imperturbability, so that he usually attains his aim, even with the most influential opponent. Such characteristics brought to Roerich many friends, but they also made him enemies.

The attitude of the artist towards his enemies is very peculiar of him. He says in speaking of a practical love towards enemies : « Do you love your enemies? You are wrong if you don't. They are diligent people. They are more useful than harmful. They are more resourceful and stirring than friends. And they often take more pains in your regard. It is true that at first they may wish to keep dead silence about you, but then, how agreeable it is to work in silence ! Later however, they will raise a tumult and in their rage they will make you omnipotent and omnipresent. Then they themselves will betray all their treacherous thoughts and designs. Therefore know how to be proud not only of your friends, but also of your enemies. »

Roerich strongly believes that trials and experiences are essential to fullest development and expression of an individuality. In 1918, when in Finland and Stockholm he wrote a story entitled « The

Flame » in which this autobiographical philosophy is clearly delineated. He says here :

« A bear menaced me, but I remained whole. Fire touched me but I was not consumed. Ice broke under my feet, yet I did not drown. My cart stopped in the fog on the brink of a precipice, yet I did not perish. My horse stumbled on a mountain trail, but I did not fall. I have lost my accumulated riches and did not grieve. I have been called to wield power and authority, but I did not succumb. Malignant pursuit chased but never reached me. Slander and falsehood hunted me, but truth triumphed. I was accused of manslaughter, but even this invention of evil I lived through. I sat with the wicked and scornful, but was saved. I suffered with the foolish, but held my own. Another laughable detail. Soon after my departure for the North someone got the idea of burying me. It was very instructive. All this was necessary. This truth I have not said heretofore to anyone. »

CHAPTER II

Nikolai Konstantinovitch Roerich was born in St. Petersburg on the twenty-seven of September, 1874. He was the eldest son of Konstantin Fedorovitch Roerich and his wife, Maria Vassilievna, née Kalashnikova. On his father's side he descends from a Scandinavian family of Viking lineage, that settled in Russia during the time of Peter the Great. On his mother's his ancestors can be traced to the Old Pskov of the tenth century. Thus, in Roerich the Scandinavian origin blends harmoniously with the purely Russian.

Roerich's childhood was spent in surroundings alien to art. His father, a distinguished barrister and a notary, was a liberal who took an active part in promoting the Law Reforms (1) and the abolition of serfdom; he was interested in the problems of the Free Economic Society (2) and in public education, but his attitude towards art was that of a business man. The boy, therefore, grew up in an atmos-

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(1) The Law Reforms of 1864 by which independent courts were established in Russia.

(2) The Free Economic Society founded by Catherine the Great in 1765 is the oldest scientific society of Russia; its aims are the study of economics and agriculture in order to help its development in Russia.

phere so remote from art that his mission in life was unfolded to him only slowly and eventually.

Though the Roerichs spent their winters in St. Petersburg, the earliest recollections of the painter are almost exclusively of their ancestral estate Iswara, a property over three thousand acres, situated about 55 miles from the capital. Speaking of these memories Roerich says : « I have fragmentary but very vivid pictures of the estate : the alleys with their border of white stones; the gravel flying from under the hoofs of the side horses in the four-in-hand driven by he coachman Selifan; the white house with its wings and its fortress-like walls of the time of Catherine the Great; the wide yard and the green lan before the main entrance; the peculiar smell, when we came there in winter for a short stay : the smell of an empty house hurriedly overheated. A large park surrounded the house, running clear down to the lake : this latter had miraculous springs and bordered upon the Imperial Hunting Grounds, while beyond an immense forest spread out, where bears and elks could be found; the number of mosquitoes in summer was such that there were cases when people were literally eaten alive by them. Side by side with the forest ran boundless fields of rye where corn flowers were scattered in abundance. »

In 1883 Roerich was placed in Mr. May's private gymnasia (1) which had harbored so many famous Russian men. Among these there at that time were Alexander Benois and Konstantin Somov who later became members of the « World of Art » (Mir Isskustva (2). When May, the director of the school, saw the small eight-year old boy he called him « professor » at once, little realizing his clairvoyance.

While in the senior grades of the gymnasia Roerich began to manifest an extreme interest in natural history; an interest which, being

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(1) Russian grammar and high school combined.

(2) At the end of the nineties a group of painters and writers, together with some art patrons gathered round the magazine « Mir Isskustva ». Later the painters of the group organized themselves into an association and arranged exhibitions, known as the « Mir Isskustva's Exhibitions ».

unsatisfield by the school, prompted him to work independently. The summer months spent in their big estate were especially productive in this respect. It was here that he learned to know and love the great beauties of northern nature : the high and transparent sky, the silvery grey mass of the clouds, the limitless forests, the hilly horizons, the innumerable wide, cool rivers and lakes.

Not very far from the estate there was an immense forest; a virgin forest like those described in fairy tales and epic songs. Here the future artist once lost his way and thus got a glimpse into its hidden life. On the other side of the estate lay the village surrounded by fields which were dotted by hundreds of tumuli and mysterious piles of stones. Ancient Russia audibly whispered here about its bygone life and the rich and fantastic imagination of the boy responded quickly to it. Together with the sons of the village deacon (1) young Roerich, then fourteen, began excavating the mounds. They were only about three feet deep which made the work easy. To the fascination of exploring these antiquities was added that of secrecy, for the boys were forbidden to uncover graves as it was considered sinful. Even Roerich's tutor, a student of the Technological Institute looked rather dubiously upon the « impiety of the profanation of tombs ». The boys found silver and gold pieces belonging to the tenth and eleventh centuries. This direct contact with objects which had not yet received the museum imprint gave Roerich a peculiar, different and perhaps the only true feeling of the past, and he became more and more wrapped up in the grey world of tumuli. The love of the North contracted in such early years remained for ever in his heart. In a letter written in 1915, speaking of nature in the provinces of Pskov and Novgorod, the painter says : « The whole district is akin to my soul : the horizons, hills, moss, lakes, rivers and clouds, — all this is mine, so close to me that I am constantly prompted to create new images. »

With such a love in his heart it was natural that the strong and

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(1) A Russian deacon is the priest's assistant.

wholesome joys of hunting should appeal to him, — and soon the boy became a passionate hunter, trampling over the country accompanied by the Finn Gustav, his faithful servant. Many amusing and other incidents are connected with this hunting. There also was, an unexpected encounter with a man-crushing bear which might have ended tragically for the artist, had not the bear decided, after a long moment of cogitation to turn tail.

His discoveries and experiences being many and interesting, Roerich did not want to keep them to himself and at the early age of sixteen he published a series of articles in the magazines « Nature and Hunting », « The Russian Hunter », « The World's Echoes », signing them by the pseudonyms « Molodoy » and « Izgoy ». These were descriptions of nature, of his hunting adventures, and epic songs.

As a result of these early impressions of nature, there grew up in Roerich an interest in painting, though the atmosphere of his home life, — as already has been mentioned, — was not calculated to create a sympathetic environment. The first encouragment that the youth ever received in this line was from a friend of his family, the well-known sculptor and painter, Michail O. Mikeshine, who by chance happened to see some of young Roerich's drawings and persuaded his father to give him an opportunity to study seriously. The future painter often went into Mikeshine's studio from this time forth (1891-1893) and watched him paint, thus receiving his first lessons.

A novice in this realm, eager to learn, Roerich was captivated by the imagination and the mannerisme of Mikeshine's painting and he tried to imitate the sculptor in every way : to draw on the same kind of paper and with the same kind of pencils. In 1891 the youth also began taking drawing lessons with I. I. Kudrin, a painter in the manner of mosaic.

Side by side with his painting the young artist was continuing his archeological work. A year before graduating from school he went to see a well-known archeologist, A. A. Spizine, in regard to some excavations. Spizine gave him access to the inner sanctuary of archeological collections, where he could take any object that interested him

and study it closely. He also introduced Roerich to the Archeological Society to which he was elected when still a college student.

In the Spring of 1893 Roerich graduated from the gymnasia and was faced by the problem of choosing his career. At that time his attraction towards painting had taken such definite forms that his one desire was to study at the Academy of Fine Arts. On the other hand his father wanted him to take up law as a profession and study at the University of St. Petersburg, planning to transfer his office to his son. The tendency to attempt to reconcile the various demands of life — characteristic of Roerich — revealed itself in this case too. Instead of refusing to accept the idea of entering the Law School he decided to shoulder both undertakings. He therefore devoted his summer to the exclusive study of drawing under the guidance of Kudrin, and in the autumn enrolled in both the University and Academy.

CHAPTER III

Roerich entered the Academy of Fine Arts at the time immediately following the reforms, one of the measures of which had been to establish special studios for certain professors chosen from among known painters and headed by Repine and Kouindjhy. The reforms on the whole were not beneficial; but as often happens in similar cases it infused at the start a new freshness and energy, as well as an interest, into the general work, which resulted from the freedom acquired by the students to choose their own professors.

The family of Nikolai Konstantinovitch looked upon his progress at the Academy with an indifference tinged by some ill will. His success was actually very great. Having entered the « head » class in September 1893 the young student was transferred the following month to the « figure » class and early spring found him already in the « life » class. Thus, his stay in the first two classes was shortened to the limit of permitted minimum.

Looking back at the painter's youthful years, one is amazed at his energy and the capacity he had of turning out an extraordinary amount of work. Besides the regular course at the University and the work in the special design classes at the Academy, Roerich had to take the college courses there as well. The difficult examinations at the Law

School were coupled with still more difficult ones at the Academy, in addition to which he had to write the final thesis for the University.

The profound study of art went hand in hand with the spiritual and scientific training of the University which also had such a beneficial effect on other college bred painters. Such painters bring into their art the breadth and refinement of general culture, by it rendering art more akin to other fields of spiritual activity, and popularizing it in the best sense of the word. The art of antiquity, expressing so brilliantly certain historical epochs, was absorbed by the young painter-lawyer from the point of view of the social sciences. In this respect it is interesting to mention that in his final thesis « The Painters of Old Russia » the juridical-social theme blended with the historical — artistic one.

In the Academy side by side with the general art program Roerich began working out themes from his country's past which he afterwards developed so much more fully. In 1893 he made the sketch « Yaroslavna's Plea » and two studies of tumuli. In 1894 — a composition in oil entitled « Ivan Czarevitch Comes Across a Wretched Hut » and two drawings « The Sea Pirate » and « Carrying the Quarry ». In 1895 and 1896 he painted the large canvasses « The Morning of the Knighthood of Kiev » and « The Evening of the Knighthood of Kiev ».

The young painter looked back searchingly into the past trying to detect traces which lead to the unknown and secret thickets of Russian antiquity, trying to revive old and forgotten visions. He turned for help in that matter to old annals, the lives of the Russian saints, and charters in the Public Library. There he met V. V. Stassov, the well-known art and music critic. It is interesting to note that Roerich had known very little about his brilliant literary activities and was not even interested in them for he was very far from any literary or artistic partisanship. Once he horrified Stassov by announcing that he had shown one of his epic songs to Burenine — Stassov's bitterest enemy and antagonist. Perhaps it was just because of this « non-partisanship » that the sincerity and depth of Roerich's love for old Russia appealed to Stassov, and this friendship, which did not go fur-

ther than the walls of the Public Library, was nevertheless of long duration. Roerich and Stassov spent many hours together ; they wrote letters to each other in old Russian style.

Beside the beneficial influence of Spizine, Stassov and two prominent professors of the Law School, Sergievitch and Foinitzky, Roerich was subjected in his student years to still another important artistic and ethical ascendancy, — that of the painter Kouindjhy. Like many pupils of the Academy, the young artist having reached the « life » class began to feel a little « mixed » because of the absence of expert guidance. It usually happens in such cases that the most gifted painters after having worked with plaster are overwhelmed by the complexity of drawing and painting from live models.

Professor Arhip I. Kouindjhy's studio as well as himself, had attained fame and popularity. On the advice of Gleb F. Voropanov, who was working under Kouindjhy's direction, young Roerich decided ta apply there. He was accepted as a pupil with an astonishing facility. The popular painter after looking over the would-be pupil's works and asking him a few questions, — said to his doorkeeper : « This one is coming here too ! » The professor's only request was that he should get his first degree in the drawing class without which no one had any legal right to work in a studio.

This was in 1895. In the Academy of that time Kouindjhy's studio was in fact a restful oasis. Here one breathed that invigorating sense of life of which the teacher himself was so full ; here painting was valued for its own sake while the development of individuality was encouraged; here one was allowed to touch upon themes which were nearest to the heart, because Kouindjhy liked a variety of subjects. His criticims were extremely original and characteristic of his own big and independent personality. He would confine himself to a few remarks, very much to the point, combined with an attentive and careful attitude towards each one's individuality. He encouraged such fantastic sketches as Roerich's « Ivan Czarevitch Comes Across a Wretched Hut », or « The Giant of the Border of the Three-times-

nine Country », as well as literary experiments like his epic song which portrayed the mutual relations of members of the Academy.

Roerich studied with assiduity but kept somewhat apart from the other pupils. He was particularly fond of working at home, because working « in public » was distasteful to him. He remained at the studio until the autumn of 1897, that is until the day when Kouindjhy, owing to some differences with the Council, left the Academy, his pupils following him of a common accord. This marked for Roerich the end of his academic course and a definite and brilliant stepping forward into an artistic career.

At the pupils exhibition of 1897 the young painter showed the following pictures : « In Byzantium » painted in 1895 and very original in the treatment of the Norman warrior; « The Morning of the Knighthood of Kiev » and « The Evening of the Knighthood of Kiev » mentioned above; and « The Messenger » painted in summer of 1897 at his father's estate « Izvara ». Our attention is arrested by the new, original and poetic treatment of the subject in this medium-sized picture where the dusky landscape and the uncommon outline of the shore speak of independent study and deep penetration into antiquity.

The dark-green water of the river the dark sky, the mass of dark buildings on the shore, and the bright yellow moon of the « Messenger » painted with wide and thick strokes of the brush — can be considered as the basic formula of Roerich's art, as an outline of his future way. The colorful scheme of this painting, — though left far behind by the subsequent development and inspirations of the young artists, — — bore witness that he was a born painter and offered at that time the interest of exceptional, yet uncomprehended novelty. A proof to this effect lies in Diagilev's (1) criticism : « It is a pity that the moon by its one bright spot breaks the originality of the picture's depth ! »

« With true artistic feeling » — says Sergey Ernst in his book 'N. K. Roerich' are disposed these dark thick colors which contrast

(1) Sergey P. Diagilev, editor of the magazine « Mir Isskustva » and influential art critic.

so opportunely with the golden bit of the moon. Freshness breathes from the general outline of the buildings on the shore and from the two figures in the boat. One is also moved by the lyric scene of northern nature with which the whole canvass is imbued, — the painter tells of a quiet, slightly damp summer night, perhaps close to autumn, when the water of the river gurgles softly, the banks are silent and mysterious and all the earth reposes in stillness. Another distinctive feature of the « Messenger » is the fresh and sincere sense of the past which made such a powerful impression on the public and which for long years to come inspired the work of the artist. His approach to antiquity is very different from that of others. The well-known heroes crowned by history and legend do not appear on Roerich's canvasses, nor does he have the usual artificiality of subject, the theatricalness of composition or of coloring, in one word nothing of that paraphanelia so dear to many Russian historical painters. The naked and unembellished face of antiquity has disclosed itself to the artist in its strong and wholesome truth. With a sharp glance he visions valleys and hills that blossomed hundreds of years ago, forests with strong trunks, and the people of that time, featureless, blended in with the trees and meadows and through this made invincible. »

The highest reward of that time was awarded to the painter — the picture was purchased by I. M. Tretiakov (1) who with his perspicacity at once sensed the future of the young artist. Roerich did not, however, receive the academic prize — a study trip abroad. Professor Mattei, of the Academy, came to see the young man privately and tried to dissuade him from leaving the Academy with Kouindjhy. He pointed out that if he should stay a year longer and work under Repine, it would be possible for him to be sent abroad to study. But Roerich considered this a Judas price for the betrayal of his teacher and refused categorically.

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(1) The Tretiakovskaya Gallery, in Moscow, given by Tretiakov to the city, contains paintings by Russian painters only and owns many *chef d'œuvres*.

In spite of the great success of the « Messenger » the situation of the young painter at the end of his official studies was not easy, nor were his first steps in the artistic field. His family still did not approve of his choice of a career. Although he went forward without halting, he seemed to move gropingly, following by instinct the impulses of his talent. He had at that time no definite plans for the future and his first works, in spite of their originality, certainly do not display many of his characteristic traits. But he always followed his own line, never borrowing nor falling under any foreign control. At that time the influence of Vassnezov was so strong that critics were apt to look for it in Roerich's first pictures as well. However, his « Morning » and « Evening of the Knighthood of Kiev » which gave cause for comparison with Vassnezov's « Bogatiry », were painted in 1896 while the latter saw light only in 1899. Roerich was also suspected of having borrowed some of his ideas from the paintings of the Vladimir Cathedral. But he first visited this cathedral in 1896 during his first trip through Russia, when he had already painted the original sketch of the picture « In Bizantium » and had conceived a whole suite called « The Slavs » of which the « Messenger » was the first to be followed later by « The Meeting of the Elders », « The Campaign », « The Building of the Town », and « The Omnious Ones ». Moreover, his first pictures differed strikingly from the style of Vassnezov and from the conventional methods generally used by historical painters.

If one were to speak of early admirations, it would be rather Vroubel, and Nesterov with whose works Roerich became familiar during the trip just referred to, at the All-Russian Exhibition of the Nijhny-Novgorod Fair. Perhaps it was then that the seeds of future color and style were planted in him. Roerich himself acknowledges his attraction to Vroubel whose personal acquaintance he made later, during one of the clear moments when the sick painter was creating « The Pearl ». Roerich recalls that during his visit to the studio, Vroubel seemed to hear some one singing and remarked « Can't you hear the Demon sing? » Who knows — muses the Roerich of to day,

— what kind of voices he heard, he who saw so much that is strange amidst the details of our grey every day life. The coloring and graphic construction of Vroubel's paintings being entirely different from those in vogue at the time, opened new horizons in the conveying of fantasy and decorativeness. The combinations of dark blue and violet so characteristic of Vroubel, are reflected somewhat in Roerich's later pictures.

In 1896 the painter did not yet attempt stylization, but he intended to convey the historical sense of his pictures through effects of twilight and dusk. This constituted a special approach to his theme, as for instance in the « Messenger » and the « Campaign » (1899). How truly — in Ernst's opinion, — and in an unexpected manner is portrayed the « Campaign », — on a rolling Russian plain covered with snow, late in the evening, a peasant army is slowly moving. They form a disorderly, broken crowd which is ascending a hill in a lazy stream. The construction used in this historical composition was so alien to the understanding of contemporary art, that even such a lover of Russian themes as Stassov could not refrain from remarking: « What a pity that they all turn their backs to the spectator and moreover almost all are standing with bent heads, looking down at their feet, as if in a state of melancholy; not one of them shows a trace of prowess, bravery or even courage. Yet no one is driving them to war by force » (1).

« The Meeting of the Elders » abounds in the same new tones, — at a late hour of the night, before dawn, beneath a sacred oak, the chiefs of clans meet to discuss the fate of their people. Their faces are undistinguishable in the dusk, and there are no distracting details. A condensed, slightly apprehensive atmosphere emanates from the picture as a whole. The manner of painting is worthy of note; — dark wide strokes of the brush, dashed off with an impressionistic air. In this regard the sketch of the painting (2) is very characteristic. The small tempera of the same year — « The Church of the Christ of

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(1) In an article in the newspaper « Novosty ».
(2) Was in my father's collection (Author).

Nereditz in Novgorod » was also very interesting in the color sense (before it was restored) — the beautiful blending of the melting snow, the rose-colored walls of the church and the March evening sky.

Moreover the painter was already creating his images directly on the canvass without using any models or making preparatory sketches. For instance, for the « Messenger » he merely looked at the skins without dressing his models in them and watched a boat cut through the water. This is one feature of his creative credo : to paint as much as one can from reconstituted memory impressions, to use his abundant store of imaginative dreams and neglect nature *per se*. Sometimes for example he would imagine himself a gnome and assume his point of view on natural objects, thus in « The Terrible Castle » (1909) representing a large stump.

During the first years after his graduation Roerich exhibited at the Spring Exhibitions of the Academy. Here were shown : « The Messenger », « The Meeting of the Elders », « The Campaign ». These exhibitions were much more interesting at that time, than in later years perhaps because Kouindjhy's pupils participated in them. Nevertheless it would have been more natural for Roerich, having displayed such originality, to join at once the newly organized group of « The World of Art » (Mir Isskustva) which had won great success and provoked much interest by its first exhibits and its literary essays. But it so happened that through misunderstandings, the future president of this organization found himself at that time in hostile relations with it. And for the reason : Kouindjhy wanted Roerich to exhibit « The Campaign » at the Academy, while Diagilev invited him to join the « World of Art ». The painter acted according to the wish of his former teacher and offended Diagilev exceedingly. Three years later, in 1902, the same situation recurred, but with a contrary effect by which Kouindjhy in his turn was hurt, although the friendly intercourse of master and pupil continued until the former's death.

The young painter's first steps in public life (1897-1899) were also consecrated to the importance of his country's past. He published articles on art and antiquity in « Notes of the Imperial Archeolo-

gical Society », in « Art and Industry », in the newspapers « Novoe Vremia » (New Times) and « St. Petersburg Vedomosty » (St. Petersburg Gazette); he lectured in the Archeological Institute and made excavations in the provinces of Pskov and Novgorod.

Here in the realm of archeology, generally considered dull and stagnant, Roerich is very much alive, a poet, sincerely inspired. « What an ageeable thrill one experiences » he says (1), « in being the first to extract from the ground some antiquity, in being able to commune directly with an epoch long extinct... The grey secular mist begins to lift and with each swing of the shovel, each stroke of the spade an alluring kingdom emerges. Wider and more abundantly are unfolded the beautiful pictures. How mysterious ! How wonderful ! In death itself is infinite life ! »

« The poetry of antiquity « he says in another article » (2), is the most intimate. It is justly contrasted with the poetry of the future; but the unrealized future, despite its immensity, can hardly create such a strong atmosphere as the poetry of the past. The bygone ages of one's own country, moreover, are nearest to man. »

These few lines give a clear insight into Roerich's understanding of ancient times. His activities in the archeological field animated by such sentiments were productive from the scientific point of view also.

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(1) « At a tumuli », 1899, first book of complete works, Moscow, 1914.
(2) « On the way to Byzantium », First book of complete works, Moscow, 1914.

CHAPTER IV

The year 1900 was very important in the creative life of young Roerich. In September he went to Paris to see the Universal Exhibition and remained there for the winter. On his way, however, he stopped in Berlin to see its museums and exhibitions.

In Paris the young artist entered the studio of Cormon, well-known for his great historical compositions. The French painter permitted his students to work freely without direct oversight. Here amidst the bubbling life of Paris, in an atmosphere imbued with the spirit of the « dernier cri », Roerich proceeded to work on « Guests from Overseas » and « Idols », conceived when still in Russia. He recalled the North so dear to him, dreamed the same dreams. Cormon knew how to retain and solidify what had already been achieved. When the young artist showed him the « Idols » and « Red Sails » (1) he liked their originality. He appreciated the fact that they were the result of personal moods and impressions based upon a direct and loving study of antiquity. Cormon cited his Russian pupil as an example of constancy and fidelity to himself. « *Nous sommes trop*

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(1) The latter was first called « Vladimir's march on Chersonesus » and renamed « Red Sails » when bought by the Tretiakovskaya Gallery in Moscow.

rafinés », he used to say, « *suivez votre chemin. Nous devons étudier chez vous qui avez tant de beauté.* »

In the beginning Roerich worked in the common studio, but as it happened in the Academy, his work did not advance very well. Then with the permission of his teacher — who remarked with worthy frankness : « classes and studios are *une blague,* we become » real « only when we remain by ourselves », — he painted in his own studio, following his own inclinations and taking his sketches to Cormon once a week.

It was chiefly in the line of design that the teacher was able to assist his pupil and as a result we have such well thought out, calm sketches as « The man with the Horn », « The Models », « The Model », « The Sculls », « The Idols » which attract us every one by their consistent though freely generalizing draughtmanship. As to Roerich's achievements in color they are due entirely to his own genius.

The experience gained through working in one of the largest studios of Paris was a valuable addition to the technical attainments of the young artist. The first hand contact with European paintings, however, was of a still greater value, especially in comparison with Russian art. In Paris Roerich became familiar with the works of Ménard, Latouche, Simon, Bénard, Segantini; he was particularly impressed by the paintings of Puvis-de-Chavannes, by the harmony of their decorativeness and the proportional simplification of their forms. It is interesting to note that in comparing the works of the very popular Boecklin with those of the much less known Hans von Marées, — many of whose pictures were shown at the Berlin exhibition, — Roerich preferred the latter's. In his article « Marées and Boecklin » he contrasts the « color feast » of the first with the « coldness » of the second and notes the difference of their methods together with the similarity of their aspirations. Marées, like Puvis-de-Chavannes, was nearer to the Russian artist than Boecklin whose ponderous distinctness of forms and especially of colors was not in accord with the novel quality of Roerich's dreams about the past.

The art of the most prominent impressionists had no effect on the young painter and the impressionistic traits which are sometimes to be found in his canvasses of the « before and after Paris » periods, must be regarded as the result of subconscious influences. During this visit to Europe the artist had not had the opportunity of becoming acquainted with the works of Gauguin whose creative genius is often considered akin to that of Roerich. Besides the absorbing study of art during his stay in the French capital the young man spent many delightful hours in various historical and ethnological museums amidst things so dear to his heart.

The work in Paris definitely completed and strengthened that unfolding of Roerich's art, the signs of which were noticeable much earlier but which was hastened by the trip abroad. The artist's acceptance of precise laws of artistic presentation, — or of what is commonly called stylization, — is the most salient new feature of these years. There are two kinds of painters — according to Ernst, — those who see earth's beauty in the plane, in the relation and in the colors in which it appears to clear and unsophisticated eyes; others whose heart and eyes are not satisfied with the variagated, wavering and troubled carpet of the « earthly Aphrodite » and who work over their artistic material into forms perhaps slightly unexpected, but serving for greater expression, strength and originality. The history of art is full of such examples. Let us examine those nearest to us, the painters Gauguin, Vroubel, Sourikov, Roerich. The latter's taste at that time turned towards exactly such a stylistic perception of the universe—from then on Roerich preserved his visions not in the naturalistic forms of the large pictures of the first period which ended in 1900, but built his composition according to the wise and stern rules prompted by his own sense of stylization.

A harmonious transition, deepening into constructiveness without any visible denial or destruction is on the whole characteristic of Roerich's creative genius. And the transition to the above described perception of art was of the same order — the artist gradually abandoned his old manner of painting and took up the new one. Thus, the

first steps of the new perception are to be seen in the small canvass « Red Sails » (1900) in the treatment of the warriors' figures, the spears and sails, though the strokes of the brush are still similar to those in the « Messenger ». In the « Omnious Ones » — painted in 1901 and bought by the Museum of Alexander III in St. Petersburg, — we find that though its dusky coloring is akin to that of the « Elders », the hills at the shore are already painted in a measured and generalized way and the silhouettes of the black ravens are imaginative.

The same traits are encountred in the « Guests from Overseas », a beautiful picture of the same year, the principal attraction of which lies in its intensely colored array. A new breath of an unknown but perceived country emanates from the purplish — yellow, sharp — pointed boats with fluttering sails gaily cutting through the transparent water; from the deep and cool blueness of the wide river above which hover long-winged sea-gulls, from the green shore — not our shore nor of our time — and from the figures that scan it; from the high sunny sky that illuminates all this feast of colors. The fresh colorful harmony, attained by a light and simple stroke of the brush, brings the tidings of liberation from the duskiness of Roerich's former pictures. And hereafter the painter never departs from it; the radiance of the earthly shy and all its resplendent glory more and more inspire his imaginings.

Likewise in the « Idols », also painted in 1901, the strong colors and the whole aspect of the landscape and of the figures are entirely different. In this canvass, of slightly darker tones, the composition is built in the same imaginative way and the landscape is calm and equally harmonious — a pagan temple on the bank of a dark blue river where redsailed boats swiftly follow the current. To look at this picture makes it clear that the painter is done with the theatrical historicalness and the conventional realism of the « seventies » and « eighties » of the last century, that he has definitely crossed over to stylization, to decorativeness, to entirely new methods of transmitting his reveries, his mysterious memories of the past.

To the same family belong the following pictures of 1902 « North », « Enchanted Place » and « The wooden town in winter », which breathe of a musing poetry. The change noticeable in these canvasses is of great significance in relation to the creative activity of the artist and its explanation can be found in these lines :

« Let our North seem poorer than that of other countries. Let its ancient face be hid. Let people know little of its truth. The fairy tale of the North is deep and captivating. The northern winds are vigorous and merry. The northern lakes are pensive. The northern rivers are silvery. The forests darkened by the time are wise. The green hills are experienced. The grey stones in enchanted circles are full of wonders. The Variagues themselves came from the North. We are still seeking the beautiful, ancient Russia. » (1).

« The ways of beauty are countless, clear straight ways, persuasive in the impression they make. Anything even slightly alien destroys the sense and the purity of the thing. Masks in art are loathsome. Loathsome is the mask of style over the design. A fresco without colors is absurd, deprived of creative harmony of tone. An open and loud song about the loved object is needed ; clear words are needed about what you want to say even if you are alone to say it. And each must find in himself his offense againts art, by what stupidity he was prevented from seeing the brilliant right way. Sometimes it is still possible to discard the unnecessary; sometimes there is still time to accelerate one's step. The acknowledgement of mistakes is not to be feared. » (2).

Rœrich's ideals and forms in art in the years following 1900 are expressed exactly by the above cited lines. He gives up his former way of carrying out a definite program of historical subjects. New visions are unfolded to him. He exchanges a narow nationalism for

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(1) « The underground Russia », complete works, first book, Moscow 1914.

(2) « Marées and Boecklin » first book of complete works, Moscow 1914.

« atavistic mysticism » and therefore his nationalism becomes wide and true, rich and strong as his beloved North, infinite in the variety of its historical changes. He forgets the « definite » and the « given » for the sake of all « that happened on our great plain. » (1).

« Subjects alternate ! How many of them ! At night the elders meet on a meadow lighted by the fire of a wood pile. Hunch-backed priests perform their conjurations in sacred forests ! Barbarians steal along the walls of wooden huts !

« Vikings in copper armor with narrow ruby-colored shields and long spears carry off their booty on brightly painted boats. Battle is in full progress on the dark azure sea ! Wooden towns stand on the near-shore hills broken by ravines, and guests from overseas sail up to them. Old legends and fairy tales come to life again ; winged dragons hover high above ; maidens of the clouds soar in the sky ; the golden haired serpent's daughter pines in a fiery circle ; valiant knights of epic songs wander through ancient steppes and deserts. But lo ! — here is a change : behind white walls loom the golden crosses of monasteries; innumerable host prepare for a campaign — in long dark files stretch bowmen and spear-bearers; messengers gallop on horseback. While in the forest a wild beast is hunted and the bugles of the Czar's hunt resound... ». This is the poetical way in which S. K. Makovsky describes the favorite themes of the maître (2)

« It is difficult » says Ernst, (3). to find elsewhere in the history of Russian art such vivid praise, full of sincere fire, to the eternal charm of the Northern motherland as is displayed in Rœrich's creations. Although in such circumstances there is full opportunity for a didactic mood, none is felt in the works of the artist because first of all they are dedicated to art, to painting. Rœrich has found the golden mean both of form and of topic, a measure which regulates them well

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(1) « The renewed earth », id.
(2) Sergey Makovsky « Pages of Artistic Critic ».
(3) Sergey Ernst « N. K. Roerich ».

and which besides adds thereto still greater expressiveness and independence. His words about « the purity of the thing » confirm in a perfect way his continual aspiration toward the purity of painting, toward its independent life, progressing, changing, but conquering new fields in each of its creative periods. The painting of Rœrich is self-contained ; it does not include the slightest trace of the coloration so often found in historical canvasses of the near past and it has that sincerity and simplicity that are so enchanting in his subjects. »

In the summer of 1901 Roerich returned from Paris. Soon afterwards he was appointed Secretary of the Society for the Encouragement of Fine Arts in Russia and a member of its Council. Rœrich's business relations with the Society began in 1898, when through the recommendation of Stassov he was invited by its magazine « Art and Artistic Industry » to write articles on art which formed the *pièce de résistance* of the magazine. The young artist brought his first article to the editor and wile waiting for him, he noticed that the copyists, in copying the addresses with lithographic ink, were not doing their work right. « Let me show you how to do it » he said sitting down to write. He became so engrossed with the work that he went on copying and failed to notice the curious glances of the editorial staff, all of whom had to look at the queer writer who did not mind taking up the work of a copyist. This circumstance, however, was the cause of the young painter's appointment as assistant editor of the magazine.

Having joined the editorial staff, Rœrich began to attack many old and very influential men for vandalism in the sphere of art, — for instance in regard to the restoration of ancient frescoes in the Sofia Cathedral of Novgorod. On the same grounds he entered into a literary quarrel with the Central Office of Press Control, which at that time was almost dangerous. These bold sallies, which made many enemies for the young artist, also gained him a number of very powerful friends. Thus, the writer D. V. Grigorovitch, then very old, who was Director of the Museum of the Society for the Encouragement of Fine Arts in Russia, taking advantage of Rœrich's differences with the editor of the magazine about their basic point of view

concerning art, — offered him the post of his assistant. The young man had hardly had time to assume his new duties when Grigorovitch died. In his stead S. B. Botkine was nominated with whom Rœrich had had the dispute about the frescoes of the Sofia Cathedral. The situation of the assistant director was a delicate one ; and as Botkine did not try to go half way to meet him, not wishing to remain in an uncertain position, he went abroad in 1900.

Thus it appeared as if his connection with the Society had been broken, but here seemed to be a driving force which struck out all uncertainties. On his return from the trip abroad Rœrich found a letter awaiting him in which some of the members of the Society asked him to run for the office of Secretary of the Society. By a majority of votes, against some of the old and offended Academicians, Rœrich was elected, in the face of the prophecy made by one of the members that now everything would perish.

This prophecy, however, did not come true ; on the contrary new life was poured into the Society. Exhibitions and lectures were organized, and new, young, more broadminded teachers were appointed. The Grand Duchess Evgenia Maximilianovna, Princess of Oldenburg, who was President of the Society, approved of Rœrich's plans for the carrying into effect of various measures tending to arouse the interest of large masses of the people. Her support was very valuable because the opposition in the Council was not idle and, as the painter acknowledged later : « all these experiences were like a bear hunt ». Afterwards when installing young men into office, he used to tell them : « I have opened the door for you; come in and make yourself master of the situation ». Having proved it himself he was entitled to speak so.

His new duties at the Society and his marriage that year with the architect Shaposhnikov's daughter Yelena Ivanovna, demanded of the young painter a more settled way of life. This, however, had not the slightest effect upon his purely artistic activities, or his capacity of studying art and antiquity. He continued to conceive and execute a series of new pictures. Neither did his new duties prevent him from devoting

himself to his old study of archeology. He made excavations, in 1902, in the province of Novgorod, presented reports at the Archeological Society, became specially interested in the Stone Age and started his famous collection of relics of that epoch. At the time of the Bolshevist Revolution this had reached the number of 75.000, and the fate of it is unknown.

« Let us forget for a while the sheen of metal ; let us think of the many wonderful shades of stone, of the noble hues of precious fur, the graining of natural colored wood, the yellow chords of reeds and rushes, and the beauty of the strong human body of the cave-man. We should keep them in mind all the time while we try to penetrate into the atmosphere of the Stone Age... » (1), thus the painter speaks.

The purely artistic work of the artist was still more intense. His pictures « Guests from Overseas » and « Omnious Ones » appeared in the spring of 1902 at the Exhibition of the Academy. The Emperor acquired the first while the second went to the Museum of Alexander III. In the Fall of that same year Rœrich exhibited for the first time at the « World of Art » the much talked of canvass « Building of the Town » which was bought by the Tretiakovskaya Gallery. This picture provoked much discussion, because the artistic premeditation of the large decorative style of painting, of simplified design and primitive forms on which depends the impressionistic vividness of an historical picture and which Roerich was so eager to attain, were not yet understood. This beautiful canvass is full of a cheerful and gay rhythm, in which sing its white, dark-blue and light-brown colors, applied with strong « square » strokes of the brush, as if in a mosaic. The tendency of the painter toward « economy » in means of expression » which it is the custom to call « primitiveness », is well expressed in this painting; the artist builds it in an economical « right » way, each line and each stroke being accounted for, each and all forming a harmonious whole, strong and at the same time simple.

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(1) « The Joy of Art » by N. K. Roerich, in « Art and Archeology, March 1922.

In St. Petersburg, in 1903 a very interesting undertaking was organized, which unfortunately did not last long, — a permanent exhibition « Modern Art », one of the aims of which was to present the most prominent modern painters. Somov's works were followed by those of Roerich. One may feel confident to say that at this exhibition, as well as a year later at the one of studies of antiquity, Rœrich had reached a definite stage of his creative activity. The drawings in coal from models, the drawings of skulls, sea-gulls, ravens, the numerous landscape studies, like « The Chapel », « The Grove », « The Fir Trees », « The Woods », « The Old Estate » and others proved beyond any doubt that the painter knew how to draw from the realistic point of view.

A loving and broad study of nature is felt in the landscapes painted at that time when standarization of forms had become one of the painter's principles. On the other hand one perceives a definite purpose, a great originality and rich variety of Rœrich's fantasy in such pictures as « The Battle with the Serpent », the panel « The Prince's Hunt », consisting of « Morning » and « Evening » (painted for the dining-room of the Grand Duchess Olga Alexandrovna's palace in Ramoni, province of Voronejh). « The Sacred Place », « The Legend about God » ; in the very poetical « Dawn in the Wooden Town », « The Wooden Town », « The river Volhov » and other well-known pictures and their variants.

By the vivid originality of his style and colors the painter tries to convey the poetry of the past, the atmosphere of the fairy tales, of the epic songs, of the legends and superstitions, of all that could be read between the dry lines of old annals. Rœrich's working out of the form is organically bound up with his mysterious perception of the past, with his strange comprehension of nature about which he tells so much, — the hills and stones, the silvery rivers and the dark woods, the fantastic outlines of heaped- up clouds. In his first works the realistic beauty of nature was already clothed in a fantastic beauty of olden times. From this source comes the bygone poetry of the night, the evening, the early morning over ancient towns ; the bygone poetry

of tumuli, rivers, lakes, of the seashore with its piled-up stones. This peculiar understanding of nature is blended in Rœrich's art with a peculiar understanding of ancient architecture.— There seems to exist a mysterious connection between ancient art and nature, an enchanting harmony of art in nature.

« The beauty of town and nature » says the painter, « in their contrast go hand in hand sharpening the mutual impression, giving a strong « tertium », the beauty of the « unknown » being the third note. » (1).

These four or five years so full of searching are responsible for the great variety in Rœrich's works. In his landscape studies such as « The Lake », « The Birch Tree », and other mentioned below, we find him an attentive observer of nature's phenomena, through the assidious study of which he derives new strength for his larger works. His searchings in the field of stylization and his tendency towards distinctiveness and simplicity are noticeable in the canvasses « The Building of War-Boats » (1903), in « Ancient Life » transparent and charming in its oriental simplicity (1904), in the very stylisized « Duel » and « Sea-Gull » (1902), in « North » of 1904 — three projects for a majolica fresco consisting of « The Reindeers », « The Hunt for Seals » and « Dance » — in the sketches made in 1905 for the fresco adorning the house of the Insurance Company *Russia*, in St. Petersburg, and in « The Slavs on the Dniepr » also painted in the same year, in which green, yellow and red tones chime cheerfully.

A long series of exhibitions abroad began in 1903. The first one was in Prague and was organized by the artistic society Manes. Then, being completed by some new works of the artist, it was taken to various artistic centers of Europe, — Vienna, Munich, Berlin, Dusseldorf and Paris (The Russian Exhibition at the Autumn Salon of 1906). But curiously enough it was noticed that Roerich never appeared at these exhibitions, though he was often either in the city

(1) « To nature » first book of complete works, Moscow, 1914.

itself, or its vicinity. This was no coincidence : it can be explained by his dislike of the commercial side of exhibitions. As early as 1902 or 1903 Rœrich published an article criticizing the modern organization of exhibitions, in which he argued that the close intermingling of art and commerce, the union of a feast of colors and of a broker's office, so much in vogue at the present time, can never lead to the development of culture.

CHAPTER V.

Rœrich's first works in the sphere of religious painting ought to be kept quite distinct. These are : « The Saints Boris and Gleb » of 1904, « Wall Fresco of the Prayer-Room », « The Treasure of the Angels », « The Fiery Furnace » — all painted in 1904-1905, — and a number of creations of 1906 — sketches for painting the church in Parkomovka, the estate of Golubevs, in the province of Kiev, « The Miraculous Christ », « The Saints Boris and Gleb » — a mosaic for the church in the fortress of Schlüsselburg, « The Blue Wall Fresco » (now at the Louvre, in Paris), « The Saint Apostles Peter and Paul », « Archangel Michael ».

The painter followed in these works the concepts of ancient Russian church painting and in developing them continued the quest for further expression. The artist's first acquaintance with church painting came at the end of the nineties. He immediately recognized and bowed before the high merits of its art of composition and the light effects which make the painting of ikons so distinctive. In 1905, a long time before the general recognition of the excellence of Russian ikons, Rœrich predicted :

« Church painting will be valuable in the near future to aid « discoveries » of art. Even the blindest, even the dullest of people will soon understand the tremendous significance of our primitives, the

significance of Russian ikon painting. They will understand and then they will wail and cry. » (1).

The wealth of imagination and the variety of subjects in Rœrich's church paintings equal that of his pictures. The beautiful large painting « The Treasure of the Angels » is full of a mystical meaning. Imagine an ikon-like dark landscape with the Citadel of Heaven in the back ground, surrounded by marvelous trees on which barn-owls are perched. A host of azure-winged angels in white garments stand silently row after row guarding a mysterious treasure with which are bound up the destinies of the world. It is a blueblack stone with an image of the crucifixion cut in, glowing with emerald hues. Two stern angels with spears and shields stand on each side of it. In « Fiery Furnace » the historicalness and the ikonlike forms of the painting blend in an original way with a realistic effect of light and sheen. Here is another — a mosaic for the cathedral in Schlüsselburg, — the stern meek face of Christ is encircled by a skilful and intricate design, while before him stand the Apostles Peter and Paul in garments boldly moulded from precious many-colored stones. Another mosaic for the same cathedral represents the Saints Boris and Gleb speeding on horseback abovea town stretched on the river bank.

All the religious paintings of the artist are executed with his usual consideration of a style in the mood of revived ancient tradition. He takes up the canons of ancient art, studies them attentively, passes his apprenticeship, and only then makes his ikons in which are so wonderfully blended the modern artistic searching with the subtle rules of antiquity. Particularly interesting in this respect are the sketches for the wall-frescoes of the church in Parkomovka inspired by Byzantium examples.

The coloring of these works brings out the same idea of a connection between the modern and the ancient.

« Look carefully at the interior of the chapel of John the Fore-

(1) « Ancient Times » 1903, First book of complete works, Moscow, 1914.

runner in Yaroslavl. What harmonies of the most transparent azure with bright ochre ! What atmosphere of ease and peace in the greyish emerald of the verdure, and how well it blends with the reddish and brownish garments of the figures. Serene Archangels with deep yellow haloes round their heads flying across the warm-looking sky, their white robes appearing only just a shade colder against it. And the gold : it never hurts the eye, it is so perfectly placed and so perfectly balanced. Truly, these paintings are the daintiest, the finest silk textures fitted to clothe the walls of the Forerunner... » (1), thus speaks the painter of one of the most beautiful Russian cathedrals.

And he wants to color his ikons with the same harmonies, only enriched by modern skill in using colors. His mosaic for Schlüsselburg is sustained in dark-blue and gold tones ; the « Blue Wall Fresco » is built upon the same combination : the holy faces calm and stern, glisten like gems in the thick azure. The figures of the saints stand out lightly in golden brown contours on a deep velvety cherry colored background — such is the colorful adornment of « Wall Fresco of the Prayer Room ». The sketches of frescoes for the church at Parkomovka are executed in a dimmed, chalky scale of blue, green and yellow, — there is almost no red or black. The exceptional decorativeness of these religious compositions is another outstanding feature by which their ancient prototypes are distinguished.

Such is the technical merit of Rœrich's ikons. There is however, also a spiritual quality, — the quality pertaining to the holy sense of God with which the church is imbued. It is this inspiration, the most needed and valuable in church painting that some critics overlooked in the works of the artist, preferring to speak at length of the rich decorativeness of their coloring. But to us it is not the attainments of form and color that appeal mostly, it is the inner bond with the religious tradition of the people, the transmutation of faith inherent in the time, that are of value. The ancient Russian church paintings are

(1) « The joy of Art », Art and Archeology, February, 1922.

phenomena of the same order as the religious paintings of Rœrich, they are imbued with the same pathos.

There is another side to the Russian soul, opposite to that turned upon celestial pursuits ; this side was also expressed by the painter at the same period. Thus, in 1905, he painted : « The Sorcerers » and « Conjuring the Water », while the following year brought forth « The Serpent's Daughter ». These pictures are full of a weird sorcery, of a rustling still dread... Looking at them it seems as if the sorcerers will eternally stand in their stone-like posture amidst boundless fields overhung by broad cold clouds ; as if the waters would never again cease their angry foaming under the spell ; and as if the golden haired girl would pine forever in the rings of the fiery serpent. One is charmed in these paintings by the quick perception and subtle manner in which the painter was able to approach the forbidden world and learn its secrets. Here Rœrich's inner visions make a seer of him, and this constitutes a characteristic feature of his work.

In the summers, of 1903 and 1904 Rœrich undertook a pilgrimage through Russia with the purpose of studying ancient Russian architecture. He visited Yaroslavl, Kostroma, Kaan, Nijhny-Novgorod, Vladimir, Souzdal, Yuriev-Polsky, Rostov-Veliky, Moscow, Smolensk, Vilna, Troky, Grodno, Kovno, Mitava, Riga, Wenden, Yzborsk, Pechiory, Pskov, Tver, Ouglich, Kaliazin, Valday and Zwenigorod.

His idea was to contrast Pskov, Petchiory, Izborsk, etc., which are « on the great way to Byzantium » and « fed by the sap of the highest culture of Hansa » with the fantasmagory of « the many-colored » Yaroslavl and Rostov-Veliky, placing between them Vladimir and Yuriev-Polsky whose art speaks of Roman influences.

It is difficult to recount all that was accomplished in these months, — every day brought something new. Seventy-five paintings called « Architectural Studies » were the result of this trip. « Architectural Studies », says Ernst, « is too modest a title for this varied and magnificent spectacle of memorials of the Russian past. They are laid on with a wide fresh brush which expressively generalizes and finally

transmits that gentle, clement peace and light with which all the monuments of ancient art are so strongly imbued. It would be well to call this suite 'The Pantheon of our Past Glory' or 'The Russian Champs Elysées'. In these canvasses the white edifices of the land of Pskov, beautiful in their stern expressiveness are replaced by the complicated well-shaped but heavy towers of the great citadel of Rostov; the Gothic echoes of Kovno and Mitava — by the wide churches of Ouglich with their five coupolas; the many colored attire of the cathedrals of Yaroslavl — by the sad loneliness of the monastery of Suzdal ant the lofty benignant peace of the House of God' » (1).

A special exhibition at the Imperial Society for the Encouragment of Fine Arts in Russia was arranged for these studies in the winter of 1904. The Emperor visited it and expressed his desire to see the whole collection in the Museum of Alexander III. Unfortunately the day of the Imperial visit coincided with the declaration of war against Japan and the matter was not furthered. Soon afterwards the studies were taken by a certain Mr. Grunwald, together with works of other Russian painters to the St. Louis Exhibition. They were not destined to return. Grunwald went bankrupt and all the paintings were sold at auction. The Roerich studies were dispersed throughout the States and only later he learned that four of them are in the Oakland Art Association (2) and forty in private collections in California, while twenty five have disappeared completely.

The great public importance of these studies must not be obscured by their artistic qualities. Roerich's was one of the first strong voices in defence of the old national inheritance of Russia, in defence of her ancient art, her soul threatened by innumerable hosts of falsehood, oblivion and destruction.

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(1) « The House of God » — a beautiful architectural picture destroyed by the painter in 1914. The destruction of pictures which for some reason or other did not satisfy him was of common occurence.

(2) Among these the « Meeting of Elders » which has been repainted before being sent to America.

« The threatening towers and walls have been overgrown, concealed by peaceful birches and bushes. The lofty cathedrals full of a romantic glamor are crushed by dreadful small dilapidated houses. The aged iconostasis are deformed by inartistic, though well-meant offerings. Everything has lost its vitality. Thus, surrounded by enemies from within and without stand the memorials of the past. Some people find no rest when they see wonderfully well baked bricks out of which factory-sheds could be built; others feel that they are prevented by a wall from laying a trolley-line; others still are troubled by inoffensive tiles and long to knock them off and carry them away so that they may crumble among garbage... » (1) this is how the painter voiced the impressions of his trip.

These impressions inspired and sustained by their sadness all Roerich's subsequent sermons on the excellence and charm of old Russian artistic culture. He has the full right to say of himself : « Learning persistence from the stones, in spite of all malevolence, I preach continually about the beauty of the national heritage. I repeat it in the most varied publications before the most varied public. » (2)

The painter has written a great many such articles, appeals and « invocations ». Their literary style is very original. Sometimes they spread into a long investigation like the « Joy of Art » (3) and « The Most Ancient Temples of Finland » (1908); sometimes they sound like a short inspired call as « Christ of Nereditz », 1906, or « The Calvary of Art », 1908, or the « Benediction », 1916. Many of these articles have been collected in the first book of complete works published in Russian in 1914, but not less have been lost among the pages of periodicals. The Revolution of 1917 has put a temporary

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(1) « Ancient Times », 1903, first book of complete works, Moscow, 1914.

(2) « The renewed Earth », first book of complete works, Moscow, 1914.

(3) « The Joy of Art in Russia » has been translated and published in « Art and Architecture » in the February and March numbers, 1922.

stop to the publication of Roerich's complete works. Among other articles of the first book of complete works must be mentioned short fairy tales and legends, such as « Devassary Abountu », « Lauchmi the Victress », « The Myth of Atlantis », « Timur-Khan », « The Frontier of the Kingdom » and others.

In his defence of the national heritage Roerich did not stop with articles : he made a great number of reports and communications to various societies and meetings.

The sentiment inspiring all his work in this field is very important and valuable because it is not for the sake of a museum revival that he pleads, but for sake of the Russian people, for the sake of their own future. He wants it to be as rich and gladsome in beauty as was their past and it can be such only if they will understand the heritage bequeathed to them by their ancestors, and made strong by it shall built a new edifice upon the old soil sanctified by the centuries. « The knowledge of one's self is one's first task. The future is based upon it » says the artist in « Underground Russia ».

Thus, one should consider that Roerich has undoubtedly disclosed a new way of understanding Russian church painting and has disclosed a new aspect of ancient Russian architecture. The experiment of Verestchiagine, Suslov and others in the use of old Russian architecture have so thouroughly spoiled any kind of approach to it, that much courage was needed to turn again to the coupolas of Russian churches. However, Roerich succeeded in his work and awakened a new love for Russian antiquity in Alexander Benois, I. E. Grabar, G. K. Lukomsky and the whole galaxy of those who harkened to the new revelation of Russian beauty.

The participation of Roerich in the work of Princess Marie Tenisheva was also due to his love for the past of his motherland. On her estate Talashkino, in the province of Smolensk the Princess, who was a true lover of old Russia, organized a whole town-workshop to pursue the aims of the revival of Russian applied arts and crafts in its broadest sense, beginning with house-furnishings and ending with toys and sewing. Beside the Princess Tenisheva, in her workshop

worked such painters as Helen Polenova, Yakounchikova, Vroubel, Malutine, Stellezky and some peasant painters. In 1903 Roerich joined this friendly group, bound by the same love, and strong in the union of the best sons of city culture and of the mother-earth. The activities and searchings of the workers of Talashkino were bound to find a quick response in the heart of the painter. He made several sketches of furniture and wood-carving for the workshop. He also wrote in 1905 a very enthusiastic article-manifesto published by « Friendship-Talashkino » and reprinted in the first book of complete works under the title « We have become poor ».

Summarizing the work of the painter during this period one notices how wonderfully his art has developed and what a splendor and wealth of color it has acquired. He paints in oil, tempera, pastel, water color and also makes many drawings. The forms of his compositions vary from the lofty realism of « The Sorcerers » to the stern stylization of « The Treasure of the Angels ». His drawing fluctuates between « Head of the Sorcerer », so full of fine observation, (1905) and the illustrations to Maeterlinck's works of the same year, fantastic in their bold interplay of lines.

CHAPTER VI

In the Spring of 1906 the painter went abroad. This trip began with Paris and Geneva but ended by confining itself almost entirely to Italy. He traversed « the great way » : Milan, Genoa, Pavia, Pisa, San Geminiano, Sienna, Rome, Assissi, Perugia, Florence, Bologna, Ravenna, Verona, Venice and Padua passed before the charmed eyes of the artist like a series of magnificent pictures. As he had seen formerly the immutable beauty of his own antiquity, so now the full glory of this foreign land was revealed to him. On one hand he was strongly impressed by the mountains, especially the « red mountains » and by the beauty of the scenery in general. On the other, a wide acquaintance with Italy, her towns and particularly her art, exercised a certain influence over him, though one should not use this word in connection with Roerich. It would be more appropriate to say rather that his eyes were definitely opened to many things and much of what was still unsettled in his mind became settled and fixed.

Italian primitives appealed to Roerich mostly, especially the touching and refined reveries of the painters of the Sienna school; he also loved the colorful charm of the frescoes of Benozzo Gozzoli, such as those in the Florentine chapel or the Palace of the Medici, and the paintings of Giotto with their expressiveness and their faint echo of Byzantium, — all these enriched his ideas of primitivism and deco-

rativeness, formerly fed only by ancient Russian and Byzantine forms. In Paris the artist became familiar with the works of Degas, Van Gogh and particularly Gauguin. It was as if this latter confirmed and gave scope to his aspirations toward bright combinations of colors, toward broad and simplified blending of color planes.

The unmarred historical charm of the architectural ensembles, with the life of San Geminiano and Sienna echoing amidst them, attracted the painter who also felt the sad peace of Pisa where the green grass of spring covers as with a fine net the ancient marbles. He liked the wide horizons of Perugia, but got a strange « mixed » impression of Rome, his heart remaining cold amidst the mirage of its visions.

The wonderful dynamic of the mountain gave still greater scope to the artist's imagination, revealing never repeated beauties of structure, colors, of extraordinarily varied moments, as when at sunrise or sunset the mournful snow summits glow with purple and gold while below in the gorges spreads a deep darkness. The accumulation of impressions from nature and from art works together with those established in former years were worked out in the inner laboratory of the painter's mind in such a complicated way that there could be no question of any definite eclecticism. In the working out of his own subjects the subtlety of Vroubel and Gauguin blended with the subtlety of church painting and of the primitives, of the rich enamels of Byzantium and oriental colors. The mountain spoke to him not in mountain landscapes, but in singularity of colors, in wonderful mysterious proportions of basic forms and structure, in the beauty of stones.

This trip abroad has been commemorated by the studies « The Mountains », « The Valley of the Rhone », « Chamossaire », « Red Mountains », which are very important in regard of their color themes. The full and vehement green, dark-blue, yellow and red tones combined with great boldness, palpitating with the rapture of the original « innate » color, introduce us to the next period in the creative activity of the painter, which might be called preeminently coloristic, because from this time on the art of painting itself especially attracts the attention of Roerich. The whole structure and sometimes even the sub-

ject of his canvasses are determined by the color array and the painter creates pictures which are exceptional in their coloristic novelty and which leave far behind the achievements of former years. In these days Roerich brings forth two important pictures which in a way sum up the past and open the door to the future, — « The Battle » and « Morning. Sea Coast Dwellers. », painted in 1906.

« The Battle » is perhaps one of the most perfect paintings of the artist, both because of its colors and its engrossing spiritualization. It is not the details of the battle that attract attention, but its atmosphere — threatening, fantastic, real, breathing of a far-off fairy past. The high and stern pathos of the battle, the pathos of a pantheistic horror, sounds in this canvass. In purplish-red glory the sunset malevolently flames forth, dimmed here and there by ruffled blue-violet clouds, the foaming waves of a northern sea rising heavily, while grey boats with red sails toss about in joined battle. The details of the battle are subordinated to the general mood of tension in which nature participates. Nature and men are blended in one : the red sails of the boats filled with warriors stand out threateningly against the background of the golden sky with its torn clouds, and the blue agitated sea with fortifications on the islands silhouetted against it. The whole picture is permeated by a gloomy poetry and by the distinctive character and beauty of the moment.

As if in contrast Roerich painted « Morning. Sea Coast Dwellers » in harmonious, silvery-grey and saphire tones. We see how unhurriedly the clouds float across the sky; fir trees grow in an orderly body on the shore; youths shoot the high soaring swans with arrows; a white-haired elder delights in watching the young ones. The clear and benignant structure of « Morning » is completely opposite to the raging rhythm of « The Battle », its whole mastery is built upon different compositional and coloristic combinations. Nevertheless the impression received from them is equally strong and it is difficult to decide which of these canvasses reflect the real soul of the painter.

One of the outstanding features of Roerich's work since the second period of his development is the variety of subjects he touches. The

pre-historic period of Slavonic life and the ancient times of the Netherlands; Scandinavian life and that of Spain; the Middle Ages, — all find a response now in the heart of the artist, formerly opened only to the Slavs.

The broadening of his horizons and the change in his perception of the universe are well reflected in his article « The Joy of Art », 1908. In it the author sees Russia as a marvelous country, the only one on earth where, by the will of fate, meet paths of many wanderers of the world, where the heritages of far-off and even unknown people come face to face and out of it is born the great and beautiful spectacle of Russian culture :

« We Russians are in the habit of searching very far back for the roots of our art. We refer them to India, Mongola, China or Scandinavia, or to the grotesque imagination of the Finns. Yet, besides the impressions left by the later tides, we have, like every other nationality, the general human path leading back to the most ancient international hieroglyphics, which explain human love of beauty : this is the path through the Stone Age.

« In the tenth century the influence of northern culture saturated the whole of Europe. No one denies that the Scandinavian epoch forms one of the most attractive artistic problems. The monumental art of the Scandinavians is exceptionally serene and noble. For a long time it was only the skiffs with their motley sails and carved dragons that used to bring the elements of the Wonderful with them into Russia. Our people adopted these with open hearts. There is no reason to regard the Northerners as rough conquerors of the original Novgorod; in any case they lived in a way which made them kindred to art, — a feature which was a powerful factor in their blending with the inhabitants of the Russian plains who had artistic imagination innate in them.

« It was really a combination of North and South : the metal sheen of the Scandinavian style beaded with the pearls of Byzantium made the ancient city of Kiev that place of beauty which led brothers to fight for it, and which tradition for a long time considered as the mother of

all cities. The astounding tones of enamel, the refinement of miniatures, the vastness and dignity of the temples, the wonders of metal work, the masses of hand-woven textures, the adaptation of the finest laws of Roman style — all these harmonized in giving Kiev its noble elegance. Men of Yaroslavl's and Vladimir's times must have had a very highly developed sense of beauty, or the things left by them would not have been so wonderful.

« It is different with the influences of the Far East. The Mongol invasions have left such hatred behind them that their artistic elements are always neglected. It is forgotten that the mysterious cradle of Asia produced these quaint people and wrapped them in the gorgeous veils of China, Tibet and Hindustan. However, through the jingling of the Tartar swords, Russia again heard wondertales known in bygone days to the sly Arabian who wandered along the Great Water-Way leading from the Baltic to the Black Sea.

« The noble character of the arts that flourished in Novgorod and in Pskov — on the Great Water-Way — was saturated with the best elements of Hansa culture. The lion's head on the coins of the Novgorod Republic is extremely like the head of St. Mark. Was it not the northern giant's dream of the distant southern queen of seas, Venice ? The now white-washed walls of Novgorod — « The Great City which was its own Master », to quote its ancient name in full — look as if they might have born on them paintings of Hansa character. » (1)

Thus, his love for Russia unfolds before the artist new interpretations of the universe and his point of view changes to Neo-nationalism. During this « unfoldment of vision » all the painter's works of 1906 to 1914 develop; the structure of the composition is not only modified in regard to ideas but also in the more complicated and enriched manner of painting.

Among the most important pictures of this period attention should

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(1) « The Joy of Art in Russia ».

be called to a very delicate tempera of 1906 — « Devassary Abuntu with the Birds ». A pale girl adorned with golden braclets leans against the ornamented portal of a Hindu temple, while beside her on a small tree blossoming with rare flovers of a rosy hue, sing greyish-blue, dark-blue and amber colored wonder-birds.

In his suite « The Viking », consisting of « Song about the Viking » (1907), « Song about the Viking on a Clear Night » (1909), « The Varengian Sea » (1909-1910), « The Battle » (mentioned above) and « Triumph of the Viking » (1908), Roerich's mastery as if in contrast with the delicate colorfulness of Devassari Abuntu, acquires the traits of a northern restraint and silence and breathes of northern waves breaking upon the dark rocks of the shore. The grey, dark-blue and light orange tones of the « Song about the Viking » are full of deep sadness : the northern sea-cliffs are plunged in the dim shadows of an early twilight; a solitary cloud, slightly gilded by the sunset, floats over them, and a girl, meditating by the calm waters, is filled with hopeless sadness. In the « Varengian Sea » deep blue, grey and redish-brown colors blend sternly, while the skiffs ready for departure stand in a formidable line and the foaming waves are cold. « The Triumph of the Viking » speaks of a great and eternal peace that envelops the blue tumuli standing by a calm grey sea. This suite inspired a young Russian composer, Baron Fittinhoff, to compose in 1918 a symphony dedicated to Roerich.

« The Old King », a pastel of 1910, is again entirely different. The good old king has come out on his balcony early one bright morning to admire his small spire-edged town sleeping peacefully under the caress of a fresh new day.

In 1906 Roerich received an opportunity to preach on art in other ways than by painting or writing — he was appointed Director of the School for the Encouragement of Fine Arts in Russia. Like many

other large Russian schools of art and industry, this school was of an official, show type where the teaching was based upon obsolete stereotyped western patterns or upon copying Russian forms without any system. General artistic instruction was organized very unsatisfactorily, partly because of a common tendency in Russia to divide pure art from artistic industry. In 1906 the situation of the school was such that a reorganization was needed and the President of the Society, Grand Duchess Evgenia Maximilianovna offered the directorship to Roerich. This change aroused new indignation on the part of the old reactionaries who even went so far as to denounce all the « radical » manifestations to the Department of Interior. Nevertheless the election took place. Then, the same ill-disposed group of the Council incited certain elements among the pupils and in the revolutionary times of 1906, at the most crucial period, the intrigues of the reactionaries found support in the seditious agitation of the masses. Meetings were held at the school and demands to the administration were presented. While the new director was not attacked, the situation was extremely difficult. As if to complicate matters still more some of the members demanded that no meetings should be held at the school, and Roerich promised it. Everybody watched with curiosity the solution of such a difficult problem, because the pupils had decided to have a meeting. When it took place the director gave ten minutes to those present to disperse and when it was not done, he said : « I gave my word that there should be no meetings at the school; thus if there is a meeting there is no school. It is closed. There are no longer either pupils, teachers or administration. » Such presence of mind revealed entirely new possibilities. At the same time Roerich had the chance to explain to the best part of the pupils how in acting in certain ways they became victims of their opponents. The meeting broke up and with this episode began the reform of the school, which soon became the largest of its kind.

Without introducing fundamental changes, Roerich manifested great persistence in reforms. His motto was : « The chief significance of an artistic education lies in opening up wide horizons to the pupils and

in inculcating the conception of art as something infinite ». (1) Starting from the principle that « art is one », gradually attracting young, known and talented painters as teachers in the school, the new director speedily carried instruction in the drawing and sketching classes to a higher level.

Special classes were opened in ceramics, wood-carving, glass-painting, and others, as well as workshops for church-painting, weaving, embossing, etc., where pupils could learn the technique of industry. Lectures on art subjects were organized and excursions to various cities and museums took place. A museum of modern Russian paintings was founded and several books were published, principally on the activities of the school. The complete freedom of enrollment and of studies, the various social classes from which came the pupils striving for artistic education, tended to make of the school a People's Art Institute, a great artistic and educational institution, — a university of art, as Roerich hoped, — where beginning with the first steps a pupil should be able to gradually perfect himself amd become a finished artist in any branch.

Roerich was very much helped in his work at the school by his understanding of human nature : when speaking with a person he was always able to find the proper words, « the style » to suit his listener. His calm and wise reserve and his logical thinking have been always a great asset for the defeat of absurd arguments and for finding the way out of complicated situations. Everybody went to him in difficulties and he never failed to find a solution satisfactory to both sides. Other striking features of Roerich's character are his fine memory and his capacity of foreseeing every possible detail of a matter which was of great assistance in directing the school.

In his article « The Talisman » Roerich speaks of the school, acknowledging his conviction, proven by experience, that in an atmosphere of sincere and honest striving towards art all differences of race

(1) « The Word », 1908.

or class can be effaced. At the school a factory-hand worked side by side with a grand duke. Among teachers as among pupils, all races and clasees were represented and united; the painter does not remember one case in which class or race prejudice caused any complications. It is only over the bridge of art and armed with its shield, that men can gain new spiritual heights, affirms the artist in this and other articles. And the atmosphere of intensive artistic construction resulting from such an understanding will steady all situations, as it did in the school where it silenced reactionary forces, awakening a new sense of respect for fellow-workers that was very valuable during the trying times of the Revolution of 1917.

CHAPTER VII

The study of Roerich's paintings for the years 1907 to 1914 show us that works for the theatre intensified and it is interesting in this regard to note his attitude toward it which was entirely different from that of many painters who devoted their inspirations to the house of Melpomene.

In spite of his close and continual contact with the theatre, the artist was able to keep clear of its complicated and marvellous machinery. He never entered into the minutiae of the performance, dit not discuss nor care for all its technicalities, was not interested by the details of stage setting; — he merely painted sketches for decorations which were a pictorial expression of the feelings awakened in his heart by the work which was to be staged.

Christian Brinton in his introduction to the Roerich Exhibition in the United States, quotes the painter as saying :

« I never paint the scenery for an opera or a ballet without first having an intimate acquaintance with both the drama and the music. I study both deeply in order to get at the spirit that lies behind both, which spirit must be one and the same if the work is to be great and lasting. Having steeped my self in the central idea, the inspiration that gave birth to the work, and permitted it to take possession of me, I then endeavor to express the same thought, the same inspiration in my pain-

ting, that the composer and the librettist have expressed in music and in words. Particularly do I feel myself in symphony with music, and just as a composer when writing the score chooses a certain key to write in, so I paint in a certain key, a key of color, or perhaps I might say a *leitmotiv* of color, on which I base my entire scheme. Thus, for example when I painted the scenery of the Valkyrie for the Moscow Imperial Opera, I felt the first act as black and yellow. This was my ground tone, for it seemed to be the ground tone of the music with its deep-surging tragedy and sudden flashing forth of momentary happiness of Siegmund and Sieglinde in the final scene. So strongly did I feel basic totality that I placed the hearth not at the side where it is usually found, but towards the center, so that when Siegmund relates the sad story of his lonely life, he and Sieglinde, at one end of the table, sit bathed in the light of the fire, the yellow flames shining on their golden locks, their heritage from the gods, while Hunding sits at the other end a black silhouette outlined against the glow, like the sombre presence of evil. »

The usual tendency of Roerich to retire into himself and guard zealously the world of his internal life is reflected in these relations toward the affairs of the theatre. Moreover, this very remoteness saved his painting from smacking of the theatrical and from any sin against the truly decorative.

The painter's first works for the stage were three projects of decorations for the « Valkyrie » painted in 1907, not made on commission but for himself. Although a beginner in this field, Roerich created something very great and very close to the rigorous pathos of Wagner's music. The same year he designed the scenery and costumes for a twelvth century Mystery Play called « The Three Wise Men of the East », showing the square of a town of the Middle Ages. It was produced at the Starinny Theatre, and won great success being followed by many commissions of the same character.

In 1908 the painter executed the sketches for Rimsky-Korsakov's opera « Snegourotchka » produced in Paris at the Opéra Comique. Of this cycle the crystal-blue light of winter midnight in the « Pro-

logue » ; the spring joy expressed in the curliness of the white clouds, the apple-blossoms, and the ingeniousness of the huts in « The Suburb » ; and the yellow and turquoise green cloak of « The Valley of Yarila » are especially interesting. In 1912 the artist did sketches of stage settings for Ostrovsky's fairy tale « Snegourotchka » to be produced at the Reinike theatre in St. Petersburg. In 1921 he again painted decorations for « Snegourotchka », this time for the Chicago Opera Company which presented it in November 1922.

In 1909 the painter began a suite for Borodine's « Prince Igor » — rather small canvasses full of sincere and simple poetry. He portrays the white cathedral of « Putivl » standing amidst grey walls under a blue summer sky ; the large dark « Tower-Room of Yaroslavna » ; the stern yelowish-red tones of « Polovetsky Stan » breathing the melancholic loneliness of the steppes ; the desolate rampart of « Yaroslavna's Plea », overhung by heavy rolling clouds where echoes her sad voice. He also executed costume sketches for this opera, remarkable for the same rich simplicity which contributes so much to the true tone of any theatrical performance.

To the same year belong two sketches for Rimsky-Korsakov's « Pskovitianka » which in their form and composition resemble closely those for Prince Igor. One is called « The Entrance of Ivan the Terrible » done in dark-blue and white ; the other — « The Tent of Ivan the Terrible » in black and red.

Roerich's next large work for the theatre was in 1910-1911 when he not only painted sketches for the stage settings of « Sacred Spring » an ancient Slavonic ballet by Stravinsky, but participated in writing the libretto. This ballet was dedicated to Roerich himself and was produced for the first time in May 1913 in Paris (1). The painter was inspired by the free and melodious music reminiscent of a moist spring wind and reproduced it in his painting, suggesting the same sense of vast freedom. The green hills blossom, the spring waters

(1) Art the Theatre des Champs Elysees, enterprise of Diagilev.

gleam, and the earth rejoices in her new-born glory, while in the sky the whirling young clouds chase one another. The colors in these sketches are laid in strong heavy layers, the lines seeming to be motivated by a powerful cosmic impulse.

In 1911 Roerich also painted a decoration for the Lopez de Vega comedy « Fuente Ovehuna » remarkable for its sharp sense of historical penetration. In this tempera the essence, the aroma itself of far-off Spain is reflected : mountain ridges of dark blue, green and cherry colored violet range one above another ; in the distance rises a castle ; in the foreground solid broad huts cleave to the rocks and above hover goldengreen cloud figures. Thus the artist imaged forth that country of beautiful women and brave men whose characters and deeds were strong and inexorable.

The costume and scenic sketches of « Peer Gynt » (1911-1912), for the production of the Moscow Art Theatre, are still more interesting in historical insight and artistic mastery. Ibsen's diverse majestic world was finely represented in this work. With a comprehensive glance the painter takes in the purplish-ruby sun-burnt « Egypt » ; the golden-green fragile covering of the northern « Hills » ; the threatening harmony of « Hegstadt » and the sad loneliness of « Peer Gynt's Hut ». The manner of painting is also in accord with the drama's mood, — done in tempera — which owing to its rich possibilities the painter adopts henceforward almost exclusively, — its measured brush-strokes revel in splendor.

Wagner being one of Roerich's favorite composers his settings for « Tristan and Isolde » painted in 1912 conveyd a high sense of dramatic penetration. They were executed for the Zimine's Opera House in Moscow but the production did not take place.

In 1914 Roerich returned to Prince Igor and painted new settings for Sanine's production (1914) at Diagilev's Parisian theatre. These sketches in their exultant red, dark-blue, greenish-golden and yellow tones are as powerful and inspiring as the emotion produced by that ancient tale of secret and formidable deeds. The magnificence of these paintings places them among the best works of the master.

The settings for Maeterlinck's tragedies « Princess Maleine » and « Sister Beatrice » are, in Roerich's opinion, among his most significant contributions to the stage. In these pastels and temperas — characteristic of the painter's further searching — one seems to hear the same words, apprehensive yet tender, sad yet bright which sound in the author's rhythmical prose, while the full-toned « spiritualized » settings reinforce their dramatic action.

The painter's landscapes of that period are no less important. They might be called historical because the themes are taken from bygone days, while their charming solitude is often enlived by figures of the ancients. It is however, no dull and conventional historicalness; they are full of a free, expansive, joyous spirit which breaks through all definitions and limits.

Has the beautiful country about which Roerich speaks ever bloomed in reality ? Who knows ! But we have upon occasions glimpsed its reflections on this earth. Cool transparent lakes amidst hills covered with yellow butter-cups ; masses of golden blue sunset clouds solemnly meeting the approaching night ; the solitude of cold sea shores which appeal so strongly to the painter. We have seen now from the deck of a boat, now from the window of a fast train, from a hill-top or at the abrupt turn of a road the fresh beauty of this artist's landscape and its reproduction moves us deeply.

Alexander Benois, for a long time antagonistic to Roerich but at last won over by his genius, finds this part of his activity one of the most important. Benois says :

« Those who ever experienced a prayerful feeling toward stern rocks or fragrant feather-grass, hazy and whispering woods, or the impetuous run of the waves, those who have felt themselves drawn by the mysterious march of the sun, they alone will understand what I meen by Roerich's real sphere. Forgotten, half-intelligible percepts reach us from grey antiquity, and are repeated in all that has not yet been infected by modern insipidity, or spoiled in nature » (1).

(1) Artistic Letters, — Retch January 1909.

Let us examine some of these landscapes. Here is « Heaven's Battle » of 1909. Immense groups of dim golden green and dark-blue clouds move towards each other ; lightning flashes and thunder roars will follow the encounter... The log houses stand pitiful and unprotected above the water, and the whole northern lake district is hushed in dismay.

A windy spring morning spreads over the sloping hills and dark-blue lake ; the whitebodied birches have put out their leaves and the modest yellow butter-cups are blooming. A young girl, full of melancholy yearning, is walking on the tender grass and one seems to hear her plaint : « Blow, wind, blow, carry my message to the motherland, cover it with thy wings, hug it close to thy heart. Help me, oh, wind, release me ! » — Such thoughts are awakened at the sight of « Unkrada » painted in 1909. This painting disappeared during the Revolution of 1917.

And here is a picture of 1910 — « An unknown elder has settled by an enchanted rock ». In a concealed river valley where the rocks and trees stand in severe order and the gloomy immobile clouds hang low, a white-haired old man has taken up his abode.

Another elder of ancient times reverently listens to the calm majesty of the night enveloping the blue mountains, while on the emerald sky, glittering in fairy-like splendor the constellations hang as spangled transparent drops of silver. Such is « The Starry Fleece » of 1912.

Roerich's other landscapes of this period are permated by the same worship of Deity in nature, for instance: « The Death's Hut » of 1909, or « Beyond the Seas are Great Countries » of 1910 which represents a desolate sea shore, rolling clouds covering the sky and a woman looking into the far distance whither the waves are running. Again the « Landscape » of the same year, — a heart felt pastel portraying a lake amidst sloping hills under a high clear sky, or « The Cloud » of 1913, an exquisite study of an immense cloud in hues of pale blue and grey, gleaming on an evening sky ; a large number of landscape studies : taciturn Finnish studies of 1907 comprising :

« Wentilla », « Olafborg », « Punkiharyou », « Imatra », « Grey Finland », « Fir Trees », « Rocks », « Lavola » and others ; the Rhine studies painted in 1909 and 1912 ; and the magnificent ones of the Caucasus of 1913.

There are times, however, when the artist's hymn to nature finds its embodiment not in rocks, water or cloud, but in man : thus we have the small tempera of 1908 « The planning of clothes » where the same rhythm of the morning is felt in the tawdriness of the bodies and the adroitness of the hands as in the peaceful waters and clear clouds in the background. The painter has used in a very original manner the myth about Orpheus, for « Human Forefathers » (1911). Brown bears are lying along grassy mounds, on a summer day, listening to a piper, and it seems as if the merry sunlit voice of all the earth was joining in, calling to life herbs and waters, beasts and men.

Roerich's worship of nature is simply one expression of his perception of the Supreme Being. In each picture, be it a landscape, memory of the past or religious painting — one feels a spiritual approach to an unknown higher plane, the invisible forces of which inspire the painter and impart a note of kinship to all his creations.

The church painting form a third group belonging to the period we are now examining. The first is an iconostasis of 1907, painted for the Kamensky family church in a Perm convent. It comprises the « Holy Gates », two « Archangels », « The Saints » and the « Twelve Holidays ». These paintings in sustained brown, green and redish tones, are constructed in accordance with stern and ancient canons. The excellency of their execution shows that the painter has completed his apprenticeship and that a broad field has been opened for him in this line for original creation. We see the proof of this in his paintings of Trinity Church in Talashkino, on which Roerich worked in 1911, 1912 and 1914.

The disposition of Roerich's frescoes in this church is as follows : in the center « The Queen of Heaven » on the shore of the River of Life. Great celestial cities guarded by angel hosts rise all round Her, while throngs of saints turn toward Her in prayer. Above Her

is the procession of prophets bowing before the Cross. The scale of colors is extremely effective : in the middle — white, gold, green, yellow are used with a change into red and turquoise ; higher up — yellow red and carmine while in the architecture there are white, green and brown with a velvety black predominating, on which the figures of the saints stand out in relief (1). Both form and idea in the frescoes of Talashkino bespeak an entirely new, lofty understanding of church decoration.

The whole composition is full of symbolism, original and unique in expression, and can be considered as one of Roerich's most important creations unifying Russian, Italian, Tibetan, Hindu and Persian traditions. The artist himself gives it the following interpretation :

« High above is laid the way of heaven ; past it flows the river of life ; this river is dangerous. Along the rocky shores ignorant travellers perish incapable of distinguishing between good and evil.

« About such lost travellers the Merciful Virgin has bethought herself and comes to their aid.

« The Most Gracious ascends from the bright city, the dwelling place of all the angels. She approaches the river of life. She gathers the saints to offer prayers for mankind.

« The angels are astonished at the glorious deed. The heavenly hosts praise the Most Gracious with the voices of trumpets. Archangels, Cherubs, Seraphs stand round the Virgin who offers Her prayers to the Most High. She prays that the travellers be taught God's ways of affliction, of salvation, of protection, of forgiveness. Bless us, Oh Lord, Divine Spirit !

« Up to God rises the Holy Virgin's prayer, Her purest orison. Let us give thanks to the Most Gracious Intercessor. Let us glorify the

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(1) The church being very large, the painter had to use strong colors to give them greater richness and clarity — pure cadmium, ultramarine, pure vermillon, etc.

Mother of God : At thy name, Most Blessed, rejoiceth every creature ! » (1).

In 1914 Roerich executed another important work of church decoration : twelve panels for the chapel of the Livshitz villa in Nice. They represent «The Master of the House», «The Blessed Visitors», «The Youths», «The Tree of Good». He also painted the doorways and the ornaments.

In idea this mural painting is similar to the « Wall Fresco of the Prayer Room » purchased in 1901 by the Museum of Alexander III. The painter's conception of it was as follows : glistening golden figures like those on an ancient precious fabric, glow in a semi-dark room, upon walls of a soft deep violet tone with golden hues. In Nice the painter was more or less able to carry out this dream. Figures painted in dark-golden tones stand out on a smoke-hued amber background, in a round room with two windows. The mood of the painting is very characteristic of Roerich — no one else could have given such decorative array to a room devoted to elevation of thought and repose from human affairs.

It is interesting to mention Roerich's other works of lesser importance but similar type which somewhat explain and complete his larger frescoes. Thus, in 1907 be painted « Prophet Elias » a canvas in smoked and fiery tones. This picture stands as an intermediary link in artistic conception between « The Conjuring of Fire » and « Heaven's Battle ». In 1908 a golden «St. George the Conqueror» saw the light and in 1909 — « The Lord Omnipotent », representing the figure of the Lord on a bright yellow background in tones of Byzantine enamels, and « Christ » surrounded by fiery angels, (a drawing for the mosaic above the entrance to the church at Talashkino). In 1910 Roerich painted « Saintly Princes » — a sketch for the top of the iconostasis mosaic of the Monastery of Pochaev ; in 1911 —

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(1) « The Holy Virgin » (in connection with the frescoes of Talashkino). First book of complete works, Moscow 1914.

« Descent into Hell », and in 1913 four sketches for the wall frescoes of a chapel in Pskov, closely resembling in style the pattern of Russian church painting of the seventeenth century ; also a sketch of an ornamental mosaic for the monument of Kouindjhy at the Smolensk cemetry.

Besides church painting, the artist executed some beautiful frescoes of a purely decorative character. Thus, in 1909 he created « Knighthood » a mural painting for the dining-room of the Bajanov residence in St. Petersburg. It consists of seven parts : « Volga », « Mikula », « Ilia Murometz », « Solovey Razboinik », « Sadko », « Bayan » and « Vitiaz ». The painting in these frescoes, silhouette-like and broad, — because of the size of the room — is built upon a combination of full tones. Thus, in « Volga » predominate dark-blue and yellow, actually the *leitmotiv* of the whole fresco; in « Sadko » dark blue is also the color of the sea and of the sky.

Although of a later period, we should mention here another decorative fresco of Roerich. In 1915 and 1916 he painted two grandiose pannels for the Kazan Terminus in Moscow in character very like the « Knighthood » fresco. One was « Battle at Kerjhenetz » and the other — « The Conquest of Kazan ».

A brief summary of Roerich's works for the period preceeding the war brings the realization that he both created a style peculiar to himself and a separate world in which he lives. Thus often one would hear about « Roerich's cloud », or « Roerich's sea », or « Roerich's sky ». Another striking feature of his genius is the exceptional and inexhaustible wealth of composition. His manner of painting varies, the abundance of his artistic ideas does not permit him to halt but urges him in every new work to press on toward fresh horizons, new harmonies; nevertheless he always remains himself, and can be singled out immediately from among the most varied painters.

Thus, in some of his works he is fanciful, as in « Peer Gynt », or a sober realist as in « The Planning of Clothes ». Sometimes his pictures breathe coolness and clarity of construction, as « Sea Coast

Dwellers », or the complexity and seductiveness of an ancient manner of painting, as in his religious compositions. In others again he applies his brush in broad free and tempestuous strokes, while in still others he paints in an attentive, « rubbed in » manner.

Not less varied are the artist's color schemes. At times he achieves a light through somewhat sad northern mood of dim-blue, green and silvery tones, as in « Unkrada », « Heaven's Battle », « Human Forefathers ». Or he revels in the magnificence of violet, ruby, saphire and golden hues as in « The Virgin on the Shore of the River of Life » and in « Fuente Ovehuna ». Some paintings he subjects entirely to one color key : thus a purple atmosphere envelops the tempera of 1909 — « Offerings » while the pastel of 1910 « The Stone Age »glows in a transparent golden-greenish color.

It is interesting to speak here of the colored canvasses on which Roerich is wont to paint. In 1906 in London he saw an unfinished picture of Michael Angele painted with sienna on a green canvass and glowing with beautiful golden colors, while sienna on a white canvass gives only an ordinary reddish color. This was a revelation to the artist of the importance in painting of colored canvasses because they bring out the true tone-harmony of the picture.

In 1912 and 1913 the painter turned to new color effects. He would take two or sometimes three strong definite color elements and combine them in a bold or even paradoxical way. Thus in « Sword of Courage » of 1912 an immense dark-blue and green hill with its castle is contrasted with the figure of an angel, sword in hand and clothed in a red flame like garment. The « Battle at Kerjhenetz » of 1913 (1) takes place under a ruby colored sky on bright green hills amidst which blazes a red lake. « The Cry of the Serpent » presents ardent dark-blue mountains piercing into a deep fiery-yellow

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(1) Sketch for the fresco of the Kazan Terminus in Moscow which is a variant of the tempera of 1911 made for Diagilev as the project of a panel to the symphonic poem of Rimsky- Korsakov.

ky, while below writhes a ruby colored serpent. The sketches for « Princess Maleine » and « Sister Beatrice » are built upon the same combination of deep tones of dark-blue, violet and blue harmonizing in an impressive though unusual way.

Although Roerich's themes often vary, there is never a repetition or any mere ingenuity in his paintings : an inner urge is sensed in them. Every new exhibiton of his works presents fresh themes, tasks, motives. The unifying feature of his work is the general manner of painting in which is felt a certain cosmic quality, in spite of the variety of color combinations constituting his peculiar style.

CHAPTER VIII.

The brilliant unfoldment of Roerich's genious was bound to bring fame and he became a favorite among Russian painters. In 1909 he received full official recognition, — he was elected Academician of the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts in Russia, member of the National Academy of Rheims, member of the Salon d'Automne, Paris, also Honorary Member of the Vienna Secession.

The intensity of Roerich's artistic work did not hinder him, however, from actively participating in the artistic and social life of Russia. In 1908 he was elected member of the Board of the Imperial Society of Architecture, and in 1909 President of the Council of the Museum of Ante-Petrian Art. Owing to his efforts in the summer of 1910, extremely important and interesting excavations were made for this Museum in the Kreml of Novgorod.

Election to the Board of the Architectural Society would have been much more unusual had Roerich not done so much for architecture, first by bringing to light that of ancient Russia, secondly by collaborating in the building of many churches and edifices. Thus, as early as 1901, together with the architect N. N. Rubzov he designed mural paintings for Olga Alexandrovna's Palace in Ramoni; in 1905 with Lidval he decorated the house of the Insurance Company « Russia »; in 1906, with Vladimir A. Pokrovsky, the church of

Parkomovka, province of Kiev, and the cathedral of Schlüsselburg ; in 1908-1909 together with Alexander Shabarovsky, the church of Kamensky in Perm ; in 1909, with A. F. Aleshine, Bajanov's residence in St. Petersburg ; in 1910, with Alexey V. Stchusiev, the cathedral of Pochaev in the Volinskaya province ; in 1912-1913, a church in Pskov, and in 1916 the Kazan Terminal in Moscow ; in 1909-1911, together with several architects he decorated the church in Talashkino. In 1913, he drew a plan for a church in Skvernivizy, the Czar's estate in the province of Lodz, and in the same year another for Prince Jevahov for a hermitage in the province of Poltava which owing to the war and the Revolution was never carried out. Roerich was also elected Honorary President of the Council of Courses in Architecture for Women in St. Petersburg.

In 1909 more honors. This time it was « The Society for Protection and Preservation of Monuments of Art and Antiquity in Russia ». Then, in 1910 Roerich was chosen to head the « World of Art » (Mir Isskustav), being its first president. There is a story in connection with this presidency very characteristic of the painter. Misunderstandings are bound to occur in every large organization. The « World of Art » did not escape them and the fact that Roerich was so prominent only contributed to the friction. The artist with his way of looking into the root of things, completely disregarded these misunderstandings when it was a question of business. And so it happened that during one of them he needed some business information. Accustomed to act directly he went straight into the enemy's camp. It so chanced also that being a person who lived in his own world he completely forgot at that time that it was Christmas Eve, and that he would tumble into the ceremony of *La Fête du Roi,* a festival of the holiday. This not only happened but he had to participate in it. Then to crown all when the lots were drawn he drew the king's and his discomfitted rivals were obliged to do him a much begrudged homage all the evening.

In 1915 the painter was also elected Chairman of the Council of Red Cross Workshops for Disabled Soldiers and from 1910 on he

gave much help and attention to the Commission of Fine Arts Editions at the Society of St. Evgenia of the Red Cross.

Beside all these activities the painter devoted time and effort to the advancement of the School for the Encouragement of Fine Arts in Russia and in this work he had the full support of its august presidents, Grand Duchess Evgenia Maximilianovna and Grand Duke Peter Nikolaevitch, who were interested in promoting progressive art.

As director of the School Roerich had to report personally to the Emperor who was its patron. The artist was then painting the pictures which placed him among the extreme radicals. However, strange as it may seem, there was no unpleasantness on this account. Nikolai II undoubtedly had a sense of art and he spoke of it simply, sincerely and without prejudice, never expressing any negative opinions. He liked Roerich's paintings, bought a number of them, some of which are in the Museum of Alexander III, never failed to come to his exhibitions. He would stay a long time discussing the pictures with the Empress, who almost always accompanied him, and with Roerich himself, showing interest in the conception of each painting.

Such close connections with Court and the favor shown to the painter brought upon him what he terms « a calamity ». He was informed one day by members of the Department of Imperial Court of the great joy in store for him : he was to be made Chamberlain. His friends say that he never exhausted so much effort and diplomacy as in trying to ward off this favor, because he remarks : « I can't imagine an exhibition of the works of a Chamberlain.

From 1910 Roerich began to refuse some of his numerous appointments so that he should have more time for the school and his creative work. Thus, in 1911 he left the presidency of the Committee of the Museum of Ante-Petrian Art and in 1913 he refused that of the World of Art.

Exhibitions of Roerich's works were organized abroad — in Venice, in 1906, 1914 ; in Paris in 1907, 1908, 1909 ; in London in 1909 and 1912 ; in Brussels in 1910 ; in Rome in 1914 ; in Malmoe in 1914. In Russia he exhibited at the « Salon » in 1909, at

the « Union of Russian Painters » in 1910 and at the « World of Art » in 1911, 1913, 1914 and 1916.

Abroad his pictures were bought — by the Museum of Luxembourg, Paris, in 1909 — « The Man with the Scraper »; by the Museum of the Louvre, Paris, in 1911 — « The Blue Wall Fresco »; by the National Museum of Rome, in 1910 — « Rostov the Great ». All Russian Museums purchased Roerich's paintings. Thus the Museum of Alexander III has twelve paintings, the Tretiakovskaya Gallery — six, while other museums in St. Petersburg, Moscow and the provinces have two or three. It might seem strange that in the period of 1909-1915 no purchases were made by the museums. The explanation is however very simple; they missed their chances. In 1909 Valentin Serov on behalf of the Tretiakov Gallery wanted to buy « An unknown elder has settled by an enchanted rock », but as museums are always very slow in their decisions, the painting was bought for the private collection of Kamensky. Illya Ostrouhov wanted to buy « Fuente Ovehuna » for the same Museum, but the *collectionneur* Golikeh was quicker. The same thing happened to « Human Forefathers » — instead of by Ostrouhov, they were bought by the private collection of Slepzov. The Tretiakovskaya Gallery was as unsuccessful. I. Grabar wanted to buy on its behalf « The Cry of the Serpent » but the Academy of fine Arts was one day ahead and bought it for its Museum. In the case of « The Last Angel », Grabar was sent abroad before he had had time to conclude negotiations and was caught there by the war.

In 1909 Roerich laid the foundation for his collection of old masters, whose art was revealed to him during the trip of 1906 and during the summer trips of 1908, 1909, 1911 and 1912 when he visited the Rhine, Holland, and London. Works of Flemish and Dutch schools occupy the principal place in this collection. At the time of the Revolution of 1917 Roerich's collection was considered one of the best of its kind and contained 300 very valuable paintings of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries . The choice of the canvasses bears

witness that here also the painter was guided by his love for vivid artistic expression and purity in the manner of painting.

In December 1915 the twenty-fifth year jubilee of Roerich's artistic and literary activities was celebrated. It is interesting to note that the event taken to mark the beginning of his work was not the awarding of honorary degrees, but his first appearance in the artistic and literary world.

Roerich left the city for that day; in his absence greetings were received from the pupils of the school, from various artistic societies, a very impressive and artistic greeting in verse by the poet Gorodetzky « The Choir of Colors », a beautiful legend by Alexey Remisov and other signs of appreciation and mementoes of love and respect.

Here are a few lines quoted from the poem of Gorodetzky :

« I am the ardent, golden
Color of the quicksand.
I am the merry, loud-voiced
Color of the sunflower.
I am the color of the hot' earth,
I am the caress of the far-off sky,
I am fire, I am blood itself,
I am the night, and smoke, and darkness.
Loudly we exclaim « Glory, glory,
Glory to Roerich amidst us,
We are a beautiful setting,
He is a sparkling jewel.
Glory to Roerich, the ruler
Of multi-colored beauty,
In a many-voiced choir of acclaim
We All his dreams we glorify. »

In November 1916 « The Free Art » published a volume containing several articles on Roerich's art, his biography by Sergey Ernst and a great number of his own writings. This book had been considered by many as a jubilee publication.

A memorial exhibition of all the painter's works, comprising several thousands of canvasses was also proposed in 1916. A large committee was formed for this purpose of which Count P. U. Suzor, President of the Society of Architects, was chairman and in which participated Leonid Andreyev, Maxim Gorky, Alexander Benois, S. I. Yaremitch, A. V. Stchusiev, V. A. Stchuko, I. A. Fomine, S. K. Makovsky, Sergey Ernst, S. A. Koussevitsky, A. V. Rumanov, Baron Ikskul von Gildebrandt, and many other prominent men of the artistic and literary world. But this exhibition was not destined to take place. No premises large enough could be found and so it was decided to postpone it; then began the well-remembered year of 1917.

In 1917 the Committee of the « World of Art » in view of the above mentioned postponment offered to show a group of Roerich's paintings and assigned a separate hall, where forty paintings were placed on view. The exhibition was opened on February 19th and continued under the gun fire from Mars Field, through experiencing all the terrors and anxietis of the Fist Revolution when the Czar was overthrown. In spite of such troublous times the exhibition was for Roerich a huge success artistically, and financially as well, since the pictures sold there amounted to 90.000 roubles.

Roerich's foreboding of the terrors of the Revolution was expressed in two articles « Dreams » which was included in the volume mentioned above and « Fears and Horrors » — a fantastic article published on Christmas day (1916) in the newspaper « Word ». They were later connected with the series of his prophetic paintings of January to May 1914 « The Cry of the Serpent », « The Doomed City », « The Crowns », « The Lurid Glare » and « Human Deeds ».

Here is in part what the artist says in « Fears and Horrors » :

« In the alley a white horse appeared out of the fog and went back into it again, as if it had never come... black cockroaches came up the stairway — no one ever saw the like... black rats crawled out from the underground, they had always been brown but now they were black — it is a bad omen !... The bell began to ring of itself, it rang of

itself and stopped of itself — that too never had happened before... Through a broken window the wind cried in a human voice — who has ever heard the like?... Certainly all this boded no good, but uncle Misha came and explained everything : the horse belonged to the cabman, the cockroaches came from the bakery, the rats — from the flour-shop... 'Uncle Misha, you just wait, soon you too will learn, — fears and horrors will come and then you will remember !' ».

The apartment of Roerich was located in the house of the Society for the Encouragement of Fine Arts in Russia and it was near the State Council, the Department of Agriculture, the Hotel Astoria and the German Embassy, that is, in the region where the firing was fiercest. The school was filled with soldiers who took up their abode there, ate and slept, but behaved very decently, there were no excesses, no searches and no looting. Even the first meeting of the pupils which, according to the opinion of many teachers, was to be hostile to the personnel and to which Roerich went in spite of warnings, ended in loud ovations.

On the initiative of Maxim Gorky, all artistic groups met at his house on March 4th, 1917, to discuss questions of art. Roerich was chairman. A committee was elected, called the Council on Art Affairs, which met at the Winter Palace. The painter worked in this Council until the 19th of May when he left with his family and went to Finland to spend the summer near the town of Serdobol on the estate of Reilander with whom arrangements had been made before the Revolution, in December 1916.

In the Fall of 1917 several people came to Serdobol to ask Roerich to return to St. Petersburg. His friends pointed out that the School needed him; that he might take part in the Government, since he and Benois were candidates for the portfolio of Minister of Fine Arts; that his pictures were in great vogue; and made him many other proposals. Moreover, the Committee of the Society for the Encouragement of Fine Arts in Russia asked the artist to work out in detail the project for a Free Art Academy, which he had hoped to eventually realize through the school of which he was the director. But it

was not fated that Roerich should return : he caught pneumonia and this changed all his plans and determined his further actions.

He went back to St. Petersburg once more, however, on Christmas 1917 with Mme Roerich. At that time he had decided to stay in Finland, as he foresaw the future. The pupils of the School and certain artistic groups made Roerich definite offers from Lunacharsky, saying that if he only would see him personally — Lunacharsky would give unlimited credit to the painter to finance all his fine undertakings.

For some strange reason the Roerichs were not able to take with them even the few things they wanted. The keepers, who were very fond of the painter and had great confidence in his rule over the school, feared that with his departure everything would go to the winds, and under various pretexts refused to take the packed boxes to the station. As a result just a very few boxes were sent, and these at such an inopportune time that they were caught in the Finninh Red Revolt and were looted.

The painter and his wife left on the eve of the Constituent Assembly, taking one of the last trains and using the return pass always required for trips to Finland and the papers from the General Staff which were still effective. Although they felt that they would not come back for a very long time, everything was left almost as it was, the appartment with all it valuable furniture and the still more valuable pictures on the walls, and even the money and current accounts in the banks. From later information it has been learned that many of the pictures were taken to the Ermitage — the former Imperial Museum.

CHAPTER IX

Quite apart from Roerich's other pictures stand his « prophetic paintings », although they are a direct outcome of all his creative activities and of the unfoldment of his genius. Beginning with 1911 the painter becomes more and more conscious of searching for still higher ideals which transform his spirit. He looks deeper into his heart, listens to the inner voice, sees mysterious visions.

From childhood the artist was subject to phenomena of mystic order. When about seven or eight years old he had dreams that repeated themselves exactly night after night. Thus there was the dream of a white figure, which came sometimes three nights in succession — a tall white figure advancing toward him from the hall. He knew that it was going to reach him; the face was invisible but he saw the white folds of its garment and felt the commotion produced by its movements.

Prediction of coming events affecting the painter have been also common since his youth. The famous Russian priest Ivan Kronshtadsky, who often visited the painter's father, once predicted an illness at the age of seven which occured just as foreseen. Years later when the artist was a pupil of the Academy, the priest came there to serve mass and after the service, noticing Roerich in the crowd, motioned him to approach. « You have not been ill anymore ? » he asked. Receiving a negative answer he remarked : « You must not be ailing; you will have to work hard for the sake of Russia. »

Experiences of a more intimate nature have convinced the painter of the truth of clairaudience and second sight. He also had innumerable cases of intuition.

The series of prophetic pictures starts with « The Last Angel » painted in 1912. The painting represents an angel standing inexorably amidst curling fiery clouds which rise from a world blazing in its last conflagration. N. Jarenzova in her work « N. K. Roerich » speaks of the way this painting was conceived and it is characteristic of many of his works, especially the later ones. « 'The Last Angel' came with the series of the prophetic pictures; but Mr. Roerich cannot explain any details. Why is it the 'last' Angel ? What is his message to poor earth overwrought by the chaos and flames around him ? What does his spear mean ? All the master knows about it are the four (untranslatable) lines which came to him together with the picture as its title. Approximately they mean the following :

'And the beautiful ever beautiful,
The terrible, ever terrible,
Last Angel
Flew over the earth !' »

There was however, another picture, described above, « Heaven's Battle » of 1910 which foresaw the coming conflict of nations.

« The Last Angel » was followed by « The Cry of the Serpent », the color scheme of which has already been mentioned. It is interesting to note that a few years after this picture had been executed the painter learned of an Eastern legend which tells of a serpent that utters a cry of warning whenever it perceives danger threatening its country.

Doom is the dominant note sounding through the three paintings of 1914 devoted to the theme of a city. « The Doomed City » — a white city at the foot of a hill surrounded by an immense flamboyant serpent; « The Lurid Glare » — the reflection of fire above the city — the symbol of Belgium; and « Human Deeds » — a city in ruins, as if interpreting the saying of the artist : « The destruction of the city is necessary for the birth of a new joy. »

Here is another symbol in the « Crowns », also of 1914, where

three kings swear on their swords while above them hover light rosy-hued clouds in the shape of crowns.

But the painter does not dwell long on the peril advancing upon the world. He sees further, and amidst the tumult of war, he paints peaceful pictures — the Russia of the churches and the saints; the Russia of her most revered spiritual teachers. Of these, says Roerich, the principal ones are Panteleon, the healer of wounds; Nicolas, the worker of miracles, and Sergey Radoneshsky, the builder of the Russian land.

The first pictures of this series were painted also in 1914 : « St. Procopius the Righteous Blessing the Unknown Travellers » and « St. Procopius Averting the Stone Cloud from the City of Ustug the Great ». In both paintings the calm of the waters, the peaceful course of the clouds, the rustle of the woods and the fields breathe of great spiritual calm and of the Higher Will ruling the universe.

The large canvass of 1916 « Three Joys » speaks still more strongly of such intuitions. Roerich was inspired by an old Russian legend about the happy peasant for whom St. George herded the horses, St. Nicolas — the cows, while St. Eliah reaped the harvest. A large peasant yard is in the foreground with the peasant family sitting outside the wooden house, while beggars coming in announce the three joys; and in background in golden tones speards a scene of rustic prosperity — a clement sun lighting the fields and meadows where graze plentiful herd and where rye grows abundantly blessed by the presence of the saintly helpers.

Two other canvasses of the same year belong to the same group : « St. Panteleon-the Healer » gathering healing herbs on an early spring morning and « St. Nicolas » coming out of the church on a bright summer day to establish order upon earth.

Roerich's landscapes of 1915 and 1916 have the same spiritual quality of calm and expanse as the above mentioned series. Thus in « Clouds », « Hills », « The Valley », « The Moss », « The Black Shore », « The Repose of the Hunter », « The Call », « The Fields », « The Lake » the painter again portrays his beloved north;

but having come very close to the silent spiritual secret of the earth his pictures speak of its calm and elemental stillness.

Enchanted places, wizards, fairies and the like are other earth powers, though magic ones and they too find response in the heart of the artist. In 1916 he paints « The flying Carpet » gleaming like a dark, deep saphire; « The People of the Woods » distinguished by its fine light structure and violet—brown tones; then « The Shadows », full of a mysterious apprehension.

Among other interesting pictures of the period before the Revolution one should mention « Meheski — the People of the Moon » — where in the depth of a dark sky a full moon stands out between clouds; below is a fantastic town, on the walls and roofs of which are figures turned towards the moon as if in prayer. Their poses denote reverie and a longing toward the world in which they formely lived. New influences are very noticeable in this picture painted in 1915. The spiritual ascent of the artist is strongly manifested in a large sketch for a decorative panel « The Wisdom of Manu » of 1916 — as if indicative of the great mysteries and powers of India.

In « Arrows of the Sky—Spears of the Earth » also of 1915 Roerich seems to want to blend more stongly the imperishable beauty of the skies with the secret of the earth; to find connecting ties between « this » and « that » world. His yellow-red tempetuous clouds correspond to the hills which are as if full of flames amidst which a host moves — but only the upturned spears and the banners are seen. In « The Message » of the same year the painter presents a boy looking in holy awe from the green earth into the boundless height of an iris blue spring sky (1). The same idea is emphasized in « The House of the Spirit » of 1916 — a large dark stone reposing myste-

(1) Here we should speak of the painting of 1912 « Listen to Heaven's Command » — a white night and a small man on a hill, while above in the clouds can be discerned the « Great Face »; — and also a picture painted as far back as 1901 — « The Story About God », where an old man sitting on a stone shows to a boy the magnificent scenery surrounding them.

riously and significantly near green fresh waters under à rosy-hued morning sky.

The artist's spiritual growth, his continual inner visions also strengthen his manner of painting. During the last years before the Revolution he preferred to build his compositions in lines and forms purposedly modest, calm, and at the same time « spacious ».

His colors as before retain their richness and originality. Some of the pictures are built upon one basic brightly glowing tone-as the fiery « Lurid Glare », or « The Arrows of the Sky — Spears of the Earth »; or « The Were-Wolf » of 1915 — a bluish toned composition as though permeated by the light of a silver moon. Again « The Boundary of the Kingdom », of 1916, filled with magical rose hues and exceptionally true and harmonious in construction. Other paintings rejoice the eye by the vividness of their « summer » coloring — white, dark-blue and golden-brown, such are « Normans on the Way to Constantinople » of 1915, the beauty of which is heightened by its emphasized rhythm. « The Three Joys » are wrapped in alternating hues of glowing golden, green, violet, ruby and crimson colors. « St. Panteleon — the Healer », beautiful in the sumptuousness and freedom of its painting, is sustained in moist spring colors — dark blue, white and green. In some other paintings, Roerich does not trumpet with loud tones, but effects a gradual transition from one to another creating a whole of a rare harmony, for instance « The Tomb of the Giant » painted in 1915 in which the freedom of the barren northern expanse is clothed in a dimly perceptible cool grey-greenish blue (1).

The general bent of Roerich's works of this period can be perceived in the search for the simplest artistic expression, broadly planned and strongly welded; and it corresponds to the spiritual progress of the painter.

(1) Roerich's paintings are in oil, tempera, guash, water colors, pastel or crayon; he makes designs for frescoes, mosaics, ceramics, wood carving, embroideries, etc. The smallest division of his work is in black and white, book decoration and illustrations.

CHAPTER X

Roerich and his family spent the winter of 1917—18 in Serdobol. This city as well as two others — Nikolas-Stadt and Vaza — were in the hands of the « whites » though the « reds » came very close, so close that rumors of an approaching « Bartholomew's Eve » filled the air. Fortunately neither prophecies nor fears came true. Serdobol was flooded with refugees from St. Petersburg, among whom were friends of the Roerichs.

In the summer the artist went to Tutola — the Island of Unity — located between Serdobol and the monastery of Valaam. There, besides finishing a number of pictures, Roerich worked on a story — « The Flame » in which the description of an island partly corresponds to Tutola. At the end of the summer it became clear that the stay in Serdobol would not lead to anything and the Roerichs decided to move to Viborg. Moreover, their money brought from Russia and exchanged at a great loss for Finnish marks was also coming to an end.

Samuel I. Gurevitch helped to bring about an exhibition of Roerich's paintings in Sweden. A timber merchant by profession and very simple by nature, he had a heart-felt way of approaching people. Having learned from someone that Roerich's money was running out, and not knowing where the Roerich's lived he visited all the stores presuming that Mme Roerich would have to go shopping; finding her

at last he said : « I would like to see your husband. Please tell him from me that I would be exceedingly unhappy to know he needed money and not be allowed to help him ». Then, on meeting Roerich he said : « What do you intend to do ? » The artist answered : « Arrange exhibitions and work as usual ! »

« Then it is not money you need ! » exclaimed Gurevitch, « it is an exhibition ». Through his efforts the Stockholm exhibition was arranged, the first of Roerich's series of post-war exhibitions. Professor Oscar Bjork was a great help in obtaining the visé and in all the details of organization. Roerich had met the professor at the 1914 exhibition at Malmô. There he had received from the Swedish Government the order of the Northern Star, which also helped for the visé.

On the 8th of November 1918 — the day of Wilhelm's abdication which somewhat complicated matters, — the exhibition was opened. In the course of its first days more pictures were sold than in the United States during a year. The Stockholm National Museum bought « The Chapel of Princess Maleine ». At the same time in the « Svenska Dagbladet » and in leading Danish papers were published long articles on Russian art in general and on Roerich's art in particular.

In December the painter returned to Viborg, while the exhibition was taken to Copenhagen. There the critics also welcomed it with an appreciative reception. In the Scandinavian and Danish papers Roerich's art was characterized by the phrases : « The Maeterlinck of painting » « Speaking Stones », « Black Opal » and the like. Lee Feigenberg wrote an article « In Roerich's land » which corresponds almost entirely with one by Leonid Andreyev, written about the same time.

This article of Andreyev appeared at the moment of the Helsingfors exhibition which was opened on the 29th of March and which contained one hundred and thirty-six paintings. Andreyev was very anxious about it because of Finland's attitude towards Russia and warned Roerich to expect a hostile demonstration. Let it be said to the honor of the Finns, however, that nothing of the sort happened.

On the contrary General Mannerheim, head of the existing Government of Finland, sent the painter Axel Galen Kallela to express official greetings in the name of Finland. Kallela emphasized a thought common to Roerich, that if all politicians were thrown out of office and the artists given an opportunity to come to an agreement, peace and good will would reign upon earth.

Still more indicative of Finland's friendly attitude was the purchase of one of Roerich's pictures. During Finland's long dependence on Russia, its Central Museum, the Atheneum, did not care to have any Russian paintings, with the exception of a picture by Somov which had somehow by chance found its way there. But after the complete political break, the Atheneum's Committee bought a painting from the series of « Princess Maleine ». The Historical Museum also expressed the desire of acquiring « The Call of the Sun », but inability to meet the price prevented this deal.

During this exhibition in Helsingfors Roerich was unanimously elected an active member of the Finnish Painters' Society.

One day about the same time Roerich received a visit from a German, representative of some organization unknown to him, who asked him whether it was true that he proposed to go to England. On the artist's affirmative answer, he said : « Permit me to make you an offer : if you desire that your art should be valued at its true worth, we will organize a series of exhibitions throughout Germany. In order that you should not be anxious about their success we would be glad to deposit to your credit in a bank the sum of money you may name ».

As in Serdobol the preceeding Fall, so now in Helsingfors Roerich felt that his work was completed for the time being and that he had to move on. He decided to go to England, stopping for a time in Sweden.

The attitude of the Swedes towards foreigners was not very hospitable. Not only was it difficult to obtain permission to enter the country, but a permit was needed to live in Stockholm itself. To avoid this bother the Roerich's were advised to settle in the suburb of Stocksund, which fitted in with the summer plans of the painter.

Experiences having taught the painter that the matter of securing a visé was always a complicated one, he began at an early date to correspond on this subject with Diagilev, then in London, and also made an application for entering France.

The artist says : « I will never forget the day when my wife and I went to see the French Ambassador. Deep in our consciousness we had the dread of being scoffed at, because all sorts of tales were circulated about the rudeness of the French towards Russians ». However, these reports proved to be false as the French were very amiable — Roerich being very well known and liked in France, — and every-thing ended well.

About the same time a requést came from the British Consulate, to call regarding the visé.

To obtain this visé Serge Poliakov and A. V. Rumanov had to give a written pledge to the Department of Labor that through his stay in England Roerich would not injure the trade-unionists.

« Of course I did not wrong them » says Roerich, « if it is not considered on offense that some of my pictures remained in England in two Museums and certain private collections. »

The visé assured, the Roerich's started out through Norway, visited Christiania, caught a breath of the most invigorating air at Fienze, the highest mountain pass between Christiania and Bergen and finally took the boat « King Haakon » on which they had a stormy passage to England.

London at first impressed Roerich as being much more lifeless than during his first visit there in 1909. He had to persuade himself that it was the same city.

Diagilev advised him to exhibit at Brown's Leicester Gallery, but the place was small and it was already contracted for a long term. Therefore the exhibition was held at the Goupil Gallery in May 1920, and was called « The Spells of Russia ». The Honorary Committee consisted of :

Lord Henry Cavendish Bentick, M. P.
Frank Brangwyn, Esq. R. A.

The Rt. Rev. Bishop Bury,
The Rt. Honble Lord Carnock,
Albert Coates, Esq.
Lord Glenconner,
The Lady Maud Hoare,
Lt. Col. Sir Samuel Hoare, Brt. M. P.
The Rt. Honble Sir William Mather, L. L. D.
Sir David Murray, R. A.
Mrs Newmarch,
Lady Newnes,
Sir Bernard Pares, K. B. E.
The Rt. Honble Sir Fredk Pollock, Brt. L. L. D.
Lady Pollock,
Charles Ricketts, Esq.
Charles Shannon, Esq. A. R. A.
Sir Cecil Smith, C. O. V. L. L. D.
Lord Treowen,
Lady Maud Warrender,
Lord Weardale,
H. G. Wells, Esq.
Mrs Hwfa Williams,
C. Hagberg Wright, Esq. L. L. D.

The exhibition was received most favorably and many articles on Roerich's art appeared in the press, among them the pamphlet of N. Jarinzov in « The Studio »—« N. K. Roerich », and an article by Albert Coates in the « Daily Telegraph », another by Sir Claude Phillips; an article by Mrs Rosa Newmarch in « The Quest ».

As a result of the exhibition, the Victoria-Albert Museum was enriched by two Russian paintings — (first Russian paintings) « Polovetsky Stan » and « Northern Landscape ». Many pictures were also acquired by private collections.

A certain Dr. Young came to see the painter after the exhibition and told him that his pictures were especially good for the color treat-

ment of patients and expressed a hope to be able later to purchase some for his hospital.

An invitation to come to Venice was received when the pictures were on view in London but it had to be refused. At that time also Robert Harshe of Carnegie Institute of Pittsburg called on Roerich and invited him to come to America offering to arrange for a tour of the United States. Later Mr. Harshe became director of the Chicago Art Institute and the tour was organized under its auspices. This was the first step America-ward.

There were also invitations from various English cities — Liverpool, Edinburgh, Leeds, Sheffield, Worthing and others. From London the exhibition went to Leeds where it opened in June. But in view of Roerich's decision to go to America the only other city that the exhibition visited was Worthing, where the composer Lady Dean Paul and Professor Paul Milukov spoke at the opening.

In London the painter saw Albert Coates whom he had known in Russia when Coates was conductor of the Imperial Opera in St. Petersburg. Coates introduced him to Sir Thomas Beecham, director of Covent Garden Opera, who gave him a commission to restore the stage settings of « Prince Igor », bought by Sir Thomas from Diagilev, and also to make sketches for « Snegourotchka », « Czar Saltan » and « Sadko ». Unfortunately Sir Thomas went bankrupt and this affected Roerich as well as many other artists.

Together with his work for Sir Thomas, Roerich was repainting for Diagilev decorations for the ballet of « Polovetsky Stan ». Having wandered through various countries and been used in five hundred performances, they were completely worn out. The painter was in London when the 500th performance was reached and received the following telegram from Diagilev :

« Te félicite, gros succès, 500e spectacle Igor, ton décor a enthusiasmé public de tous pays. Amitiés. Diagilev. » (1)

(1) Congratulations, great success, 500th performance Igor, your decoration has roused the enthusiasm of audiences of all countries. Friendly greetings. Diagilev.

On an order from L. M. Skidelsky, while in London, Roerich also executed a series of panels « The Dreams of Wisdom » which were to adorn Mr. Skidelsky's country house. However, this house was never built and the order, from being a very large one, gradually dwindled to only a few panels.

In connection with a growing interest in the art of the Orient, the thought of a trip to India direct from England appealed to the artist and his wife. At first every-thing seemed to favor such a plan. The visé was promptly secured and the tickets bought; but the time had not yet come. In the course of one week the plans went to pieces, invested money was lost through a bankruptcy; all sort of difficulties arose, while at the same time the trip to the United States outlined iself. The tickets for India were exchanged for tickets to New York and on the 23-d of September 1920 Roerich, his wife and two sons embarked on the ss, « Zealand » for America.

During this trip the artist was almost killed. The rail of the upper berth broke and he fell, striking the corner of a trunk with his temple. The ship was caught in a cyclone, but thanks to the captain who had received warning by radio and held back, only the end of the cyclone touched them.

CHAPTER XI.

A trip from a country where the exchange is very low to one where it is very high is bound to bring a number of difficulties, especially if one is entirely unacquainted with the customs of that country. Thus it happened with Roerich in America, where he arrived on October 3d, 1920.

The exhibition was opened on the 18th of December, 1920. Its success was immense. The first day the crowd was so large that according to Mr. Mc Bride of the *New York Herald* it exceeded all previous exhibition. An idea of the jam is given by a story which appeared in one of the newspapers about the poor negro boy running the elevator at the Kingore Gallery, who had gone crazy from overwork.

[e]The Committee of Honor consisted :

Princess Cantacuzene,
Mrs John Alden Carpenter,
Mrs William Astor Chanler,
Mrs Newbold Le Roy Edgar,
Mrs John W. Garrett,
Mrs De Forest Grant,

Mrs John Henry Hammond,
Mme Izwolsky,
Mrs Rita Lydig,
Lady Dean Paul,
Mrs Abram Poole,
Mrs Walter Rosen,
Princess Rospigliosi,
Miss Mary Hoyt Wiborg,
Mrs Egerton Winthrop,
Miss Elsie de Wolfe,
Mr. Clyde Burroughs,
Mr. George W. Eggers,
Mr. William Henry Fox,
Mrs. Robert B. Harshe,
Mr. R. A. Holland,
Dr. Christian Brinton,
Mr. Charles Hovey Pepper,
Mrs Cornelia B. Sage-Luinton,
Mr. George W. Stevens,
Mr. Frederick Allen Whiting,
Mr. Raymond Wyer,
Mr. Jerome Landfield.

Several pictures were sold at once to the best New York private collections. At that same time Robert B. Harshe, director of the Chicago Art Institute, planned the route of the exhibition's tour which closed on the first of April 1923, and visited the following twenty-one cities : New York, Boston, Buffalo, Chicago, St. Louis, Madison, San Francisco, Omaha, Colorado Springs, Denver, Kansas City, Cleveland, Indianapolis, Columbus, Milwaukee, Minneapolis. Des Moines, Ann Harbor, Muskegan, Detroit an Rochester.

In almost every city pictures were bought for private collections and by Museums. Thus the Omaha Art Association bought « The Tower of Princess Maleine » ; the Kansas City Art Institute — « The Lord

of the Night » ; the Evansville Art Association — « Monhigan »[e], the Detroit Art Institute — « Camp of Polovetz » ; the Library of Harvard University has a costume for « Czar Saltan » and the Oakland Art Association — four pictures of the series brought by Grünwald to the St. Louis Exhibition, given by Dr W. Porter (owner of many Roerich's paintings).

The exhibition met everywhere with great success. The press was very favorable and many articles appeared by prominent men and women of the artistic world. In two churches the ministers spoke in Sunday sermons of Roerich's works as an exceptional phenomenon, the spiritual import of which was of immense value.

One of the results of the New York exhibition was an offer from the Metropolitan Opera Company to execute settings and costumes for « Snegourotchka ». At the same time the Chicago Opera Company made Roerich a similar offer accompanied by the commission to make designs for « Tristan and Isolde ». This work of Wagner was one of the painter's favorites and as he had already made two sets of decorations for « Snegourotchka », he gave the preference to the Chicago Opera. Unfortunately, however, the Direction of the Chicago Opera, after receiving the sketches and admiring them very much, had to withdraw the commission on account of financial difficulties.

« Snegourotchka » was produced on the 16th of November 1922, the press agreeing that it was the best performance ever given by the Chicago Opera Company. « A lavish feast of colors », « true fairyland » and other similar superlatives were used in speaking of this production. In spite of a lawsuit between the Direction and the painter, Roerich had to appear in response to the calls from the audience and bow his acknowledgment of the unanimous applause.

In connection with making the designs for « Snegourotchka », Roerich gave a lecture at Marshal Field's on « Spiritual Garment » speaking of the harmonization of the color in clothing with the color of the human aura, which creates an extremely powerful effect, little understood at the present time.

As another result of the exhibition invitations reached the painter to lecture on art in various cities. These he accepted and spoke in Boston, Buffalo, Chicago, San Francisco, Detroit and Santa Fe. He gave several lectures at California University on the effects of beauty, also at the California Art School, the Chicago Art Institute and other public institutions. Roerich also spoke several times in New York, the last time in February 1923 at the St. Mark's in the Bowery on « The Great Note in Russian Art ». He said that art being one, is universal and that the best credentials with which to enter a Russian village would be a song or a picture. Quite unexpectedly to the painter and the audience he was followed by a representative of Soviet Russia in the United States, who remarked that the best credentials for entering Russia would be the paintings of Professor Roerich.

In the winter of 1921 while in Chicago Roerich took an active part in founding the International Society «Cor Ardens» (April 1921). The motto of the society is a quotation from one of the artist's lecture — « The Path of Blessings » — and reads as follows :

« Cor Ardens » is a concrete move to bring together at least in spirit sympathetic isolated individuals.

« We must walk the rising road of grandeur, enthusiasm and achievement with all the powers of our espirit. »

There were ten honorary presidents elected for ten various countries, Roerich being the honorary president for Russia.

The summer of 1921 the Roerich's spent in New Mexico, Grand Canyon, Arizona, San Francisco and Los Angeles, and on their return to New York another institution was founded — The Master Institute of United Arts, on November 17h, 1921, whose motto has also been taken from « Path of Blessings » :

« Art will unify all humanity. Art is one — indivisible. Art has its many branches, yet all are one. Art is the manifestation of the coming synthesis. Art is for all. Everyone will enjoy true art. The gates of the «sacred source » must be wide open for everybody, and the light of art will influence numerous hearts with a new love. At first this feeling will be unconscious, but after all it will purify

human consciousness. And how many young hearts are searching for something real and beatiful ! So give it to them. Bring art to the people — where it belongs. We should have not only museums, theatres, universities, public libraries, railway stations and hospitals, but even prisons decorated and beautified. Then we shall have no more prisons ! »

The Master Institute of United Arts includes classes of music, painting, sculpture, opera, ballet, drama and has lectures on various subjects.

The third institution in which Roerich was the moving spirit was « Corona Mundi », an international art center founded on the 11th of July, 1922. Its motto also is taken from a lecture of Roerich «Beauty and Wisdom » and reads as follows :

« Humanity is facing coming events of cosmic greatness. Humanity already realizes that all occurences are not accidental. The time for the construction of future culture is at hand. Before our eyes the revaluation of values is being witnessed. Amidst ruins of valueless banknotes, mankind has found the real value of the world's significance. The values of great art are victoriously traversing all storms of earthly commotions. Even the « earthly » people already understand the vital importance of active beauty and action. We know verily, that we pronounce the formula of the international language, and this formula which now belongs to the museum and stage must enter every day life. The sign of beauty will open all sacred gates. Beneath the sign of beauty we walk joyfully. And now we affirm these words not on the snowy heights, but amidst the turmoil of the city. And realizing the path of true reality, we greet with a happy smile the future ».

Among the many activities of the «Corona Mundi» is the founding of a Museum of Roerich's paintings, containing about three hundred of his pictures. We find several instances in the history of art of such one-man museums, for instance the Museum of Hans von Marées in Schleisheim, near Munich, or the museums of Gustave Moreau and Rodin in Paris, and we know that in the collection of works

of one artist the personality is felt much more strongly and is better understood. The painter's dream of bringing Russia and America together which was expressed twenty-five years ago by the organization of an American Art Exhibition at the Society for the Encouragement of Fine Arts in Russia, has thus been carried out further.

Thus these three institutions, uniting all branches of art — « Cor Ardens », a brotherhood of artistic creators of all nationalities ; the Master Institute of United Arts, a purely educational institution, forming an army of the bearers of beauty of the coming era ; and «Corona Mundi», an international Art Center for guarding and distributing art products, — are apparently parts of a larger whole and all bear the basic thought of the kingdom of beauty which Roerich began to promote when still in Finland.

In order to understand the importance and significance of this teaching of beauty one more quotation seems necessary :

« Friends, if we realize how vital was Beauty during ancient times, what immense uses of the emanations of Beauty we can make in our everyday life ! If in the Mediaeval Ages Beauty was considered the « Gates to Paradise », how necessary it is to take all practical advantage of this basis of life and to repeat as a prayer each day : Love, Beauty and Action ! And how all-embracing is Love; how profoundly must be felt the sense of Beauty, and how vitally must we understand the meaning of that virile expression, Action. And this command must not be forgotten once when we can introduce it into our daily life. The new era is not far off and not one day can be lost. »

« Perhaps you will ask me why we must repeat constantly this prayer of Love, and Beauty ? Because frankly so many even of our sisters and brothers try to avoid Beauty in their everyday life, and erroneously they think to have sufficient reason for this mistake. But if Beauty is the Shield of the World, if the aura of the World's Teacher is luminously radiant, even the smallest seeds of this splendor must be reflected in our life. And the awaiting ones and the expectant ones must be the first to prepare the place of Beauty in life. So,

vitally, until we see the results, must we repeat this prayer of Beauty — the Crown of Action and Love. » (1).

It would be apropos to speak here of the mystic influence which is more and more traceable in Roerich's life. In the Spring of 1921 he wrote in Russian a book entitled : « The Flowers of Morya » and containing a poem, « To the Hunter Entering the Forest ».

« I love thee, o my hunter !
And I shall give thy quarry to the Sons of Light.
And even shouldst thou err,
Shouldst thou for a time descend into the hollow,
Shouldst thou even look back upon the skulls.
Shouldst thou by laughter drive away a part of the quarry,
Yet I know that thou goest untiringly for the hunt,
That thou art not discouraged and wilt not lose thy way.
Thou knowest how to find thy way by the sun
And how to turn to the road guided by the whirlwind.
But who set it afire — the Sun ?
And who drove it here — the whirlwind ?
But I speak to thee out of the sphere of the sun.
I, thy friend, thy teacher, and thy companion on the way.
Let the huntsmen and the leaders of the beaters be friends.
And after the chase, resting on the hill
Call unto thee the huntsmen and the leaders of the beaters.
Tell them how thou didst go unto the hill
And why the hunter must not lurk in ravines,
And how thou didst meet thy quarry on the crest
And how thou wilt know that this quarry is thine.
And how to leave aside all smaller prey.
For he who goes after it will remain with it.
Tell them also how the hunter bears on him all the signs of the hunting
And how he alone knows his art and his quarry.
Tell not of the hunting to those who know not the quarry.
In the hour of trouble, in the hour of poverty

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(1) « The Herald of the Star » June 1923.

They will engage themselves as beaters
And in the reeds take part in the hunting.
But, o hunter, understand the huntsmen.
Drink water with them by the fire of rest.
Understand, o understanding one !
And having finished thy hunting
Mend thy nets and plan a new hunting.
Be not alarmed and seek not to alarm.
For shouldst thou alarm, a still greater fear will turn on thee.
Plan simply.
For all is simple.
All is beautiful.
Beautiful is that which is planned.
All fear shalt thou conquer by thy unconquerable essence.
But shouldst thou begin to tremble, then, defeated,
And reduced to naught,
Neither crying aloud, nor keeping silence,
Having lost consciousness of time, place and life,
Thou wilt lose the remnants of thy will.
He who knows—searches !
He who has attained knowledge—finds !
He who has found is amazed at the ease of capture !
He who has seized—sings songs of joy.
Rejoice ! Rejoice ! Rejoice !
O hunter who hast been called thrice ! »

The diverse activities of the painter together with his exhibitions through the country brought him in contact with many people of various types. Among these were painters such as Geo. Bellows, Norman Bel Geddes, Carl Hoeckner, Robert Edmund Jones, Spicker; the sculptor Alfeo Faggi ; art critics and architects such as Royal Cortissoz, Easter Field, Alfred Bossom, Claude Bragdon; the poet, Ridgely Torrance ; the composers Ernest Bloch, John Adler Carpenter, Deems Taylor ; art patrons such as Charles R. Crane, Dr. Cornelia Debey, Mrs John Garret, Dr. Herman Hille, Mrs Tinidat Izwolsky, Otto Kahn, Spencer Kellog, Adolph Lewison, Louis Horch, Mrs Mary

B. Longyear, Charles H. Pepper, Ernest Poole, Dr. Rogers and directors of Art Museums like Robert B. M. Harshe, George William H. Fox, J. Nilsen Laurvik, Mrs Cornelia Sage-Quinton, Dudley Crafts Watson and many others.

Summing up this period of Roerich's work before the departure of the painter and his family for Paris, which took place on the 8th of May, 1923, it is interesting to cast a rapid glance over the various opinions expressed on his art and note what in his multiform creative activity attracted the most attention. The following symposium is of significance.

Of Roerich's paintings, *Rabindra Nath Tagore* wrote : « Your pictures profoundly moved me. They made me realize one thing which is obvious and yet which one needs to discover for oneself, over and over again ; it is that truth is infinite. — Your pictures are distinct — and yet are not definable by words. Your art is jealous of its independence because it is great. »

Andreyeff, the great Russian writer, devoted the last work published during his lifetime to an appreciation of Roerich's art. Too long to quote in its entirety, one may cite a brief quotation showing the admiration of this great Russian for his fellow artist : « The world of Roerich is a world of Truth. — Any attempt at transmitting its enchanting beauty through words must be fruitless. That which has been thus expressed in color will not tolerate the rivalry of words and stands in no need of them. Here (in Roerich's realm) is the cradle of wisdom where the heavenly words about God and Man came forth speaking eternal love and eternal struggle. »

Alexander Benois, the Russian painter and critic has written : « Roerich has learned from the voices singing in his soul to love and understand humanity in general.

« The philosophical value of Roerich's work is very great. I see in it more than merely artistic individuality. He is the representative of a whole school of thought, even of a whole sphere of culture. For expressing the gist of his philosophy he does not adopt abstract forms, but remains within the circle of concrete images, and pictures of life

— a life maybe, remote from our minds, yet ever convincing in its past existence and calling forth a familiar echo in our hearts...

« At this present hour when peoples are possessed by the devils of enmity and untruth, Roerich withdraws into his desert — as I withdraw into my temples — to create prayers to the Lord of Peace and Beauty. »

Sir Claude Phillips, leading critic of England, says, « This celebrated Russian painter gave a most interesting series of the spiritual Beauty. »

Arsène Alexandre, critic of « Figaro », says, « The austere and virile Roerich, sees the earth, above men, in its most ancient and powerful aspects. »

C. Hagbert Wright, director of the London Library, writes, « In many articles and monographs devoted to his work Roerich has been called « The Maeterlinck of Painting ». In France he has been compared to Gauguin ; in Sweden to Munck and Gallen ; in Italy — with the Byzantine painters. These desperate efforts to find his counterpart are a compliment to his versatility. But when all is said, Roerich remains Roerich — one of the strongest personalities in contemporary art. »

N. Jarentzov, Russian writer, writes of him, « Roerich's freedom is the freedom of imagination in the higher planes. It makes him treat each composition as a clear note in the harmony of the universe. »

In a reverie written about Roerich and his art, in which he traces his spirit from the Ruriks of old, *Alexey Remizov,* the writer, says in part : « And there again appeared a man — and settled in Petersburg on the Moyka ; no more from the Varengian Sea but from Kostroma Town ; and no more Rurik — but Roerich.

« And again as of old he built for himself a stone town. The memory came back to him as in a dream, and he told us about the seas where he used to sail with his Friendships of Warriors ; about the giants and the serpent and the noyadas, about the Terrible Angel and about how Russia was being built up and how the treason of the Russian Princes opened to the foe the gates of the Russian land.

« He built for himself a stone town — as roomy and free as the Old Novgorod that was its own Master — and the glare from his bonfires is again spreading hot and high over the Russian land. »

A. A. Koiransky, the painter, says : « Roerich is capable of seeing further and clearer than the uninitiated. Through the veil of of the temporary he sees the eternal. The inspired art of Roerich discloses before us the eternal beauty.

« Roerich's genius armed with all the wisdom of artistic experience and in which the poet's inspiration is coupled with the mastery of color-harmonies, is continuously rising towards new heights of achievement. »

Mrs. Rosa Newmarch, critic : We have with us at this moment the most original representative of Russian art : a seer, a painter, a creator without counterpart. »

Boris Grigorieff, his artist compatriot : « His name is on the lips of the world. Before me is the magazine « Studio » dedicated to our great artist, and I am proud when I think that Roerich is able to arouse the human soul. »

M. Cornfeld, critic : « In Series Heroica is expressed the inner meaning of Roerich's creation. Mystically realized miracle, revelation manifested by Heavenly signs. You are experiencing the ineffable ecstacy and you are ready to see God in Heaven. Such are the feelings expressed by Roerich in his works. »

Prof. P. Miliukov : « Then came the uncompromising Roerich. Roerich's cosmogony rather reminds one of Wagner. It beings like that of Wagner in deep and elemental tones of the world chaos and it winds up in a clarified apotheosis of a Parsival — in Roerich's latest creations. »

G. Baltrushaitis, the Russian poet, says : « Roerich could not win a more beautiful crown than this organic bond between his work and contemporary social evolution in the search for the Holy Grail. »

Stephen Jaremitch, director of the Museum of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts in Petrograd : « The new era is coming in our life. And this is testified by the manifestation of powerful artistic

individualities, who strike us by the harmony of their natures and with the profundity of their creation. Among these happy ones, stands the colorful and deeply original creative figure of Roerich. »

Denis Roche, « Gazette des Beaux Arts » : « There is an exceptional destiny in the artistic life of M. Roerich. He has won his renown remarkably, taking it with a logical clarity and a spirit of rare decisiveness. »

Gordon Bottomley, English poet, writes : « For indeed as I think about your room full of marvelous inventions in Queens Gate Terrace I am happy that I am in the world at the same time as you ; and, as I gather we were both born in the same year, I have every hope that I shall stay in it as long as you do, to see the wonderful things that you are going to do.»

Serge Ernst, curator of Hermitage : « The attainment of the latest of Roerich's creations is the searching for the simplest, broadest and strongest colorful expression, which is harmonizing with the spiritual path of the master, so beautiful in its purity and strength. »

D. Burliuk, cubist artist, says : « Roerich is one of the most characteristic figures in Russian Art. His name during 20 years manifests the fame of Russian culture. »

Gleb Derujinsky, sculptor, writes : « In the versatility of Roerich's creations is to be seen a unique personality, loving Russia deeply. The Roerich exhibitions is a deep joy for every Russian. »

Amelia Defries, English critic, says : « Roerich has enormous power and force, yet without ever « forcing ». I do not know of a painter who can get such effects as he gets in color. His drawing has the same remarkable power and breadth and is intellectual as well as emotional. His painting may be described as at once scholarly, scientific and fearless ; added to this there is the poetry of the mystic who is a worshipper of Nature, a Walt Whitman in painting, in a sense. »

Horace Shipp : « Nicholas Roerich sees through the glass less darkly than most and has the genius of telling his visions. »

F. P. Marchent : « Roerich is not only Russian, but human in the

broadest sense. He devotedly follows his own path, linking up for him humanity with the spirit of the cosmos. »

Among others who have joined this symposium of praise are : *William Ritter, Milos Marten, Dr. Th. Arne, Leo Feigenberg, Frank Brangwin, M. Voloshin, S. Makowsky, Louis Reau, Jacques Blanche, A. Rostislavov, J. Stravinsky, Vittorio Pica, A. Gidoni, W. Stassov, Serge Diagilev, Al. Mantel, A. Coates, F. Salda, Serge Gorodetsky, Mikail Fokin, E. Kronberg, Hubert Cyriak, Peter Altenberg, Theodore Oppermann, Louis Vauxcelles, Axel Gallen-Kallela, Oscar Bjorck, Mestrovic, Maurice Denis, George Chklaver,* and many others.

Nor has America been silent upon Roerich's art.

Norman-Bel Geddes, at the first exhibition of Roerich in America, wrote : « This is an important event to us here. In his painting, even though so Russian, there is a simple spirit that comes straight to everyone. No more honest, clear-visioned artist ever came to our shores. »

Henry Caro-Delvaille says : « In the midst of our modern society so positive and so limited, he gives to his fellow artists a prophetic example of the goal they must reach — the expression of Inner Life. »

From *Ivan Narodny's* pen comes this statement : « Like Moussorgsky, Rimsky-Korsakoff, and Dostoyevsky, he is one of the towering geniuses of Russian history, — like all the great men of Russia his works manifest a prophetic tendency and deep religious feeling without being in the least didactic. Mr. Roerich's art speaks to us a language without words, a language that is sacred and universal ; it is the language of intrinsic aesthetic symbols which, like the language of the magicians of the Old Ages was meant to perform miracles in everyday life. »

Dudley Craft Watson, director of the Milwaukee Art Institute : « The exhibition is open and is more beautiful than we had even hoped. — About your painting, it needs no explanation, but if I can help to open the eyes of some of the people to its potent message of

beauty and quality, the inner struggle of the spirit, the supreme calm of the soul, I shall feel that my effort is well repaid. »

G. W. Eggers, director of the Denver Art Association : « There is a tremendous interest on the part of the intelligentia and again on the part of very simple people who come without that « little learning » which is so dangerous a thing. The bringing of your exhibition has meant great things to the younger artists of these Western cities, and it is most gratifying to see how quickly many are enraptured with your message. »

Alexander Kaun, professor of the University of California, writes : « Nicholas Roerich is one of the noblest sons of spiritual Russia, for he is wondrously synthetic. One is struck by his versatility ; jurist, poet, publicist, professor of archaeology, director of an art school, member of the Academy... But it is not versatility that composes Roerich's major force. The essence of his irresistible appeal lies in the unity of his complex personality, in the rhythmic oneness of his multifarious motives, in the synthetic harmony which pervades the universe created by his brush. »

Cornelia B. Sage Quinton, of the Buffalo Fine Arts Academy : « A dreamer and a visionary, he derives his strength from intimate communion with Mother-Earth and the throbbing humanity. Art, he knows, is not a luxury, but an indispensible element of human existence. And he dreams of a great and a beautiful temple built in some art center, the meeting place of International Art. With earnestness so characteristic of him he points to the crying need of such an institution in these days of great social and political upheavals. He dreams of this Democracy of Art, an institution, if needs be, capable and strong enough to defend itself against the Vandal. »

Babette Deutsch writes : « This land of Roerich's is truly « great and rich », extending even to those hidden regions of the spirit which few care to find and fewer penetrate. »

From an article by *Mary Fanton Roberts,* art critic, one reads : « You see (in Roerich) power and courage and a certain magnificent

understanding of the forces of nature, and how much greater they are than the people who are helped or hurt by them — Roerich is certainly at one with life after death, with nature and our earth. This oneness is organic with him. »

Hunt Diederich, the artist, writes : « Roerich is in my opinion the essence of all that is Russian — full of imagination, simplicity and strength, convictions and regardlessness of opinions. »

F. Nielen Laurvik, director of the San Francisco Museum : « The exhibition of the work of the famous Russian painter, Nicholas Roerich, is an art event of the first magnitude that presents to San Francisco one of the most interesting and fertile personalities now active in contemporary art. The collection has already been shown in the Boston, Chicago, St. Louis, and other important Eastern museums, where it has created a furore in art circles as well as among the general public. »

Ossip Dymov, the dramatist : « Roerich is the memory of Russia. In Roerich Russia remembers his childhood and the time of gray past. For this Roerich is Rurik, the prince of spirit, the real ruler of ancient North-Varyag, from the sea, entering Russia. He, who sees and understands the origins, can also forsee and understand the future. »

Dr. Christian Brinton, « There is a cosmic impersonality to this art that recalls the days when the world was fresher and more spacious than it seems at present. Nordic in its imaginative richness, the art of Roerich is also classic in its appolonian love of light and clarity. It fittingly epitomizes the spirit of those who, born in the mist-wrapped reaches of the North, seek the radiant serenity of Hellas. »

Mary Siegrist, in the *New York Sun* « One regrets that it is a 'world of limits' in writing of the art of that great Russian, Nicholas Roerich, who is now in our midst and whose paintings are now being exhibited in the Kingore Galleries. From these canvasses there speaks an arresting and formidable genius. If, as Dostoyevsky believes, 'beauty will save the world', then these paintings will do much to help lift the 'ancient burden of the soul', and to relight with fresh beauty the world's old altar fires. »

Royal Cortissoz, the *New York Tribune,* « The essential charm of his art springs from his depth of imaginative power, its inventive fervor. The strangeness of fairyland descends upon the beholder and yet he feels that fairyland has come true. Some such sensation as this we have in traversing Roerich's exhibition. »

From *Frederick W. Eddy* in the *New York World :* « He brings to modern perception for the first time the weird spirit of the northland where the long twilight and the longer night work upon the fancy and intensify artistic creation. Generally the temper of the work is austere, but he is master of form and colors as has been no other Russian here, his technical command is sure and his impulse is strongly idealistic. »

Frances Grant writes : « The paintings of Nicholas Roerich possess the immortal quality of Scriptural utterances. Within them each man may find nurture for his soul. To the humble they are a benediction. And the initiate may recognize in these Parables, the prophecies of an Elected Spirit. »

Alfred Bossom, in the *Architectural Record :* « Professor Roerich's work has a distinct message for American architects at this time because like that of the Renaissance masters, it is a radical, modern expression of contemporary life, yet sure, serene and permanent. »

Redfern Mason writes : « Professor Roerich also remembers that Russia is Europe's gate to the Orient and he loves the art of India. That affection stirred a sympathetic chord in the heart of Rabindranath Tagore, who sees in the painter a spirit akin to his own. »

S. Jay Kaufman, of *The Globe,* writes : « A great painter, a great poet — a mystic — a seer — and a prophet. A great painter because, although painting of Russia, the appeal is universal. A great poet, because, as Andreyev said, he sees the soul of things clearly A mystic, because he seems to know of life after death. A seer, because in 1913 and 1914 his paintings prophesied the war with its havoc and terrible aftermath. Some publisher should publish these « Prophetic Paintings ». « The Lurid Glare » is a symbol for Belgium. « The Doomed City », a lifeless city encircled by an

enormous serpent — Russia. « Human Deeds », wise men contemplating a heap of ruins. »

In addition, such men as *Sargent, Oliver Saylor, Alfeo Faggi, Augusta Owen Patterson, Charles Pepper, Dr. Coralnik, Lucien Moorehouse, Bessie Hendricks, Tessie Glasier, Arthur Wilhelm, Eugene Stinson, Allan Mc Ewin, F. W. Coburn, Jane Dixon, Lucy Calhoun, M. B. Williams, Bushnell Diamond, Ruth de Rochemond, Sholem Asch,* and numerous others have added their praise.

Thus we see that different people in various countries, sometimes hostile to each other unitedly perceive that the corner stone of Roerich's creative genius of the last period is his spirituality, a truth confirmed by such pictures as those in the « Sancta » series, « He himself Came », « Saintly Guests » and his last work, the series of the « Messiah ».

CHAPTER XII

Reviewing Roerich's works fo the period of 1917 to 1923, only a little over five years we are struck by the same prodigious productivity, for the number of his paintings and sketches reaches over five hundred. In color sense these pictures are crystal clear. As to the subject matter, its fantasy is as varied as ever, but now it reflects more and more the inner visions, it conveys a stronger impression of that world, hidden to ordinary sight, which is revealed to the perception of Roerich.

The first important work of this period is the « Heroica » suite consisting of seven pictures : « The Hidden Treasure », in which a treasure is being lowered from a boat into the sea; « Noyada », a fairy, or perhaps a witch, cooking wonder-working herbs in the silent retreat of a sea-cave; « Command » imparting the sense of a supernatural command sent out across the sea, in which the clouds seem also to participate; « Sacred Fire », in which among cold grey rocks a sacred fire is seen burning eternally; « Eternally-waiting », — a few women sitting motionless near a hut, patiently expecting some great event; « The End of the Giants », in which titans are seen transformed into rocks; and the last « The Conquerors of the Treasure » — men carrying something busily from a cave down onto a boat. All these seven paintings are not only related to each other by their inner

conception, but also by the coloring which, inspite of each picture being in a separate key, is like a whole mosaic.

The picture « Cor Ardens » was painted in 1917 in two variants. It is interesting to note that in one the figure in the foreground is a man while in the other it is a woman, conveying the longing of the heart for the sacred sign.

In « The Lord of the Night » there is another woman in golden tones kneeling in a tent who seems to be awaiting the coming of a higher being. The sides of the tent are thrown open disclosing a view of the river and a horizon enveloped in blue mist.

« Ecstasy » is one of the most powerful paintings of that time. « The Way to India » is the hidden meaning and gazing at it one feels the relationship although perhaps one cannot point it out. A huge mass of rocks piled up through the ages occupies almost the whole canvass. Three profiles can be distinguished chiselled out in these stones, one tragic, one embryonic, and one of the animal cast. But even more striking is the small figure of an ascet around whose feet ants have already built their hills while he stands motionless, lost in contemplation. The whole picture is bathed in dark luxurious colors, in which predominate violet, blue and brown with overhues of blue-green and rose merging into red. The color effect is that of a precious stone irridescent as opal looking altogether different from various angles.

« The Knight of the Morning » and « The Knight of the Evening », also painted in 1918, hint of a vision of higher planes. The Knight is a messenger, a worker going out into the world to overcome evil, and returning victorious. The first picture portrays a peaceful northern landscape of hills and lakes. Its soft tones of greenish yellow slightly tinted with rose are those of an early dawn. The sky is clear except for one rose-colored cloud in the form of a horseman. « The Knight of the Evening » is also embodied in a cloud, dark blue and grey, with strongly outlined wings — the horseman returning from a battle with a dragon.

« The Sons of Heaven » is remarkable both in its spiritual meaning

— it illustrates Genesis VI — and in its extraordinary coloring, rightly called black opal. It shows a mass of rocks green, darkblue and purple, with yellow veins, before which four women sit in various poses, clad in golden garments. Between the rocks water is seen, the clear grey cold water of the north, while above in the lavender-purple sky of a sunset four masculine figures can be clearly discerned. Their aura is so strong that the women cannot endure it, and only one dares to look up.

Drenching sunlight poured from a brassy sky, coloring the air as if by a beam of lime light, and transfiguring the sea and shore — this is « The Call of the Sun ». « The Treasure » is in one key, all in blue. In it a man, turning his back to the beauty of the landscape, hides a treasure. « Evening » is also in blue tones; the hills, water and trees are enveloped in a blue mist, shot through with slightly golden-rosy hues, while at one side sit a group of elders.

A large head, Mongolian in type, with closed eyes painted in greenish tones, is rising up from the water; in the foreground a dark brown hill with four tall trees, the horizon, the water, the sky, all bathed in a misty golden yellow — this is the « Dream of Orient ». Very soft grey misty tones predominate in « Rain Fairy », while in the background blue hills with a greenish tint stand out; on one side the grey clouds seem to part reveling a golden one in the form of the rain fairy. Dark rocks like ancient towers projecting into a lake, of which only a very small part is seen, contrast harmoniously with an early dawn sky of blue fading into light green, with stars still luminous in its upper reaches. In the stillness of this morning twilight figures are distinguished landing from a boat and creeping stealthilhy along a hidden way — such is « The Secret Passage ».

The saints — the spiritual teachers of Russia — continue to occupy a large place in Roerich's works. « St. Tiron Discovering the Arrow Sent to him from Heaven », represents the saint coming out of the monastery and finding the arrow with a script at its end. It is winter; the ground, roofs and hill in the distance are covered with snow, which is rosy white in the sunlight and blue and ice-green in the sha-

dow. A flaming sunset illumines the sky with a glow of reddish yellow hues. « St Mercurius of Smolensk » was inspired by the legend which tells of the saint receiving in a dream a command to go and fight the Tartars ant to bring back his own head cut off by an unknown warrior. The painting shows the saint returning to the town, carrying his head. « St. Boris and Gleb » was also suggested by a folk tale. It depicts the saints in a small carless boat on the lake, with a blue hill in the background. The picture is sustained in blue tones and breathes profound peace. « St. George » is arrayed in a red and black color scheme and shows the saint on horseback.

« Corona Mundi », presented by the painter to the institution of that name which he organized, is of an ancient Russian ikon-like type — two saints, a man and a woman, stand on both sides of a tree on which two doves are perched; the woman holds a crown, while the man has a small temple in his hands. « The Call of Bells » is full of sunlight; it is part of old Pskov, with its churches, grey in the foreground, with the exception of one which is red; and brick colored with green cupolas standing further back, all lit up by the sun. « The sacred Lake », with its monastery on a hill, has an inspired and visionary mood.

There are many landscapes belonging to this period of 1918-1919. They all portray northern lakes and rocks, cold limpid northern waters and blue hills. « The Castle Mount » is in violet and purple tones mingled with brown and dark blue. Golden rays of sunlight pierce through a dark threatening cloud, here and there illumining the lake and the hills. « The Blue Morning » is translucent in color, showing blue hills surrounding a lake. Those in the foreground are darker, and the sky is a misty grey.

To 1920 belong the panels — « The Dreams of Wisdom » which were inspired by the reverence for womanhood in India. « The Song of the Waterfall », « The Song of the Morning », « Moon Song », « The Language of Birds », « The Sacrifice », and others convey the idea that woman understands the language of birds and

animals, of the waters and the forest. Six of these panels were keyed in green tones, and three in purple.

The unfoldment of Roerich's genius reached a very high point during his sojourn in the United States, to which his latest pictures bear witness. The most distinctive and characteristic of this period are the « Sancta » series, « He Himself Came », « The Messenger », « Saintly Guests », « The Bridge of Glory » and the two last which closed his work here, the « Messiah » series, comprising « The Legend » and « The Miracle ».

As it has been noted before, the painter seldom sees things singly but paints as if in sequence, by series; it is not only the idea of a picture but also the tonality of each which together form, so to speak, a whole chord. Looking at the « Sancta » series, we see, in the yellow-amber tone of « And We Work » the monks going to the river at dawn for water; in « And We Do Not Fear » two hermits talking face to face with a bear in the violet purple of a frosty winter evening; « And We Open the Gates » reveals to us a joyous cool morning when the gates of the monastery are opened to a new world reposing in a saphire-blue horizon of wonderful clarity. In « And We Continue the Fishing » fishermen are struggling on a dark colored agitated sea while above are spread the purple, scarlet and gold of the ending day. After the crimson of this intense work we plunge into the green twilight that precedes dawn, and in the stillness of the night we follow the monks walking from church one after the other carrying candles; this is « And We Bring the Light ». Then the last of the series, in a definite golden tone of ochre and cadmium shows a monk standing in holy wonder befor a miraculous face of Christ, — « And We See. »

« The Messenger » is all in violet tones. A woman opens her door and is surprised to see a messenger from a higher plane bringing glad tidings; through the opening one glimpses the landscape beyond with a snow mount and a sky of early dawn.

« Saintly Guests » give an extraordinary effect of clarity. The picture is composed in dark violet and dark blue tones; a thunder cloud

is pierced in places by sun rays, reflected in a lake which is surrounded by hills. Two saints and a boatman are crossing the lake, headed toward a small monastery with a single cupola church, standing on one of the hills; three saints from the monastery await the arrival of the saintly guests.

Among the pictures of the latest period there are as usual many landscapes — Santa Fe, Arizona, Grand Canyon, Rio Grande. The « Ocean » series of Maine are full of spiritual power and infinite peace.

In the canvasses « Himself Came », « The Bridge of Glory » and the « Miracle » the artist has touched upon the new theme of bringing out the colored aura of the figures. The first painting represents a saint surrounded by a greenish, glimmering light, standing at his church and meeting arriving monks.

« The Bridge of Glory » — a saphire blue bridge produced by the aurora borealis reflected in the quiet waters of a northern lake speaks of similar endeavors. In the foreground rises a dark hill with a chapel on top toward which walks St. Sergey Radonezhsky in reverie, visioning the future significance of a spiritual bridge which will connect heaven and earth in the glitter of glory — in the glow of the northern lights.

The two last pictures of the « Messiah » series constitute a synthesis of two of the oldest legends. One tells of the Messiah coming on a white horse holding a brilliant star-comet as a sword. The painting shows a youth in the early greenish light of dawn reading an ancient script, while behind him against the breaking light in the sky is outlined in clouds the figure of a horseman — the long expected Messiah; the tail of a comet gleaming as his curved blade.

The other legend says : « Across the bridge will the Messiah come and at the bridge shall we meet him ». The picture portrays seven waiting figures bent down, perhaps fallen because of the unbearable effect of the aura of the Master, who is still unseen behind the bridge, while the wonderful light of his aura transforms all the hilly landscape. The scenery of Arizona serves as background for the first

painting, while in the second, one recognizes immediately the distinctive rocks of Grand Canyon.

It is in this original way that Roerich expressed his impressions of America ; looking at these pictures one realizes that travelling through the colorful desert of Arizona and listening to the great stillness of the Grand Canyon the painter's thought turned to the Messiah. It seems most significant that precisely these two pictures should end the work of the artist before his departure for India.

France Adney in an article on Roerich published in a Madras newspaper says that it was perhaps unconscious on the painter's part that he started his artistic career with the « Messenger » in which it seems as if he foresaw his own destiny. Then after the « Variagues », the « Building of Towns », the « Doomed City », « The Last Angel » through the « Heroica » series, through « Ecstasy » and « The Lord of the Night », he should come to the « Sancta » and « Messiah ».

PAINTINGS BY NICHOLAS ROERICH IN MUSEUMS AND PRIVATE COLLECTIONS

AUSTRIA

Vienna : Mietkee Collection.

CZECHO-SLOVAKIA

Prague : Marten Collection.

DENMARK

Copenhagen : Hagemann Collection; Sheinin Collection; Savitzky Collection; Feigenberg Collection.

ENGLAND

London : Victoria and Albert Museum; Worthing Art Gallery.
Private Collections : Countess Benkendorff; Braikevich; Coates; Cooper; Lady Dean Paul; Dembovsky; Hagberg-Wright; Hubrecht-Northfield; Johnson.

FINLAND

Helsingfors : Athenaeum.

Private Collections : Gallen-Kallela; Hvatt; Jarvinen; Lydecken; Strindberg.

Viborg : Private Collections : Crotte; Gourevich; Groenross; Rosenthal; Rudnev; Sheinin; Tumarkin.

Raivola : Kersten Collection.

Sortavala; Frey Collection; Relander Collection; Solntzev Collection.

Tyriseva : Andreyev Collection.

FRANCE

Nice : Livshitz Collection.

Paris : Louvre, Pavillion Marsan; Musée National du Luxembourg.

Private Collections : Baron de Baye; Armand Dayot; Maurice Denis; Goloubeff; Jacquin; Levinson; Mollo; Pavlovsky; Denis Roche; Roumanov; Sviatopolk-Chetvertinsky; Princess Tenicheva.

GERMANY

Berlin : Tumarkin Collection.

Dresden : Rubin Collection.

Munich : Private Collection.

HOLLAND

Amsterdam : Stuertz Collection.

Hague : Pustochkin Collection.

INDIA

Bolpur : Tagore Collection.

ITALY

Rome : Galleria Nazionale di Arte Moderna ;

Private Collection : Kamensky Collection.

JAPAN

Tokio : Skidelsky Collection.

LATVIA

Riga : Shibaieff Collection.

MONACO

Monte Carlo : Miss Mary Garden Collection.

RUMANIA

Kishinev : Museum of Bessarabia.

RUSSIA

Kazan : Mantel Collection.
Kiev : Parhomovka Church.
Private Collections : Bielashevsky; Filipov; Hansen; Tereschenko; Vlassov.

MOSCOW

Tretiakov Gallery; Bahrushin Museum; Moscow-Kazan Railway Terminal; Palace of Grand Duchess Elizabeth.
Private Collections : Burdjhalov; Chaliapin; Fetissov; Goloushev; Hirshmann; Kassianov; Karishev; Katchalov; Knebel; Koussevitsky; Jakunchikova; Korsinkin; Langovoy; Lokhova; Lopatina; Leonidov; Mardjhanov; Mark; Matveiev; von-Mekk; Nemirovitch-Danchenko; Petrov; Pokrovsky; Perzov; Sanine; Serov; Shehtel; Stanislavsky; Stcherbakov; prince Stcherbatov; Troyanovsky; Tretiakov; Vissotzky; Zimin.

Nijni-Novgorod : Municipal Art Museum.
Odessa : Ashkinasi Collection; Braikevich Collection.
Perm : Voskresensky Convent.
Peterhof : Palace of the Grand Duke of Oldenbourg.

Petrograd : Museum Alexander III; Museum of the Society for the Encouragement of the Fine Arts; Museum of the Academy of Fine Arts; Museum of the Russian Archaeological Society; Museum

of the Russian Archaeological Institute; Museum of the Kuindji Society; Palace of the Grand Duchess of Oldenbourg; Palace of the Grand Duchess Olga.

Private Collections : Aleshin; Allegri; prince Argutinsky-Dolgoruky; Bakulina; Bajanov; Bejetsky; Beklemishev; Beliy; Belozvietov; count Benkendorff; Benois; Bertensohn; Bielkovsky; Block; Botkin; Botkina; Brodsky; Butkovskaya; Burtzev; Comaiko; Crotte; Danilov; Davidov; Dmitriev; Dobichina; Drampov; Dvukraev; Eremeiev; Ermakov; Evreinov; Fabrizius; Fokin; Fenoux; Frolov; Fuks; count Golenistchev-Kutuzov; Maxim Gorky; Goldberg; Golubeva; Gorielov; Golubev; Gourian; Grigoriev; Groushevsky; Guidoni; Hilse van der Paals; Houdekov; count Ignatiev; Ivanov; prince Jevahov; Jeverjheev; Karakash; Karatiguin; Kamensky; Kaiser; Kistakovsky; Kisstosser-Kitrossky; Kolosov; Komissarjhevsky; Korovin; Kondakov; Kotovine; Kittner; Kratchkovsky; Krivenko; Krivoshein; Kurbatov; Ldov; duke of Leuchtenberg; Levin; Lipovsky; Eivshitz; Eopatine; Lubovsky; Makovsky; Makarenko; Mark; Mitussov; Molvot, Napravnik ; Neusheller ; Nechaev-Maltzev ; Nikolsky ; Nottgaft ; count[e] Olsoufiev; baroness Osten-Sacken; Ovsiannikov; Pilenko; Pisemsky; Pletnev; Pokrovsky; prince Poutiatin; Poliakov; Protopopov; Remisov; Reutern; Rimsky-Korsakov; Rijhov; Rostislavov; Roslavlev; Roerich; Rumanov; House of the Insurance Co. « Russia »; Sahar; Sergovsky; Shubin-Pozdieev; Sleptzov; Shneider; Siromiatnikov; Soikin; Soloviev; Stabrovsky; Strutinsky; Steinberg, Stchussiev; Stchiavinsky; Stepanov; princess Sviatopolk-Chetvertinskaya, Sviatlov; Sviatlovsky; Tchernishev; princess Trubetskaya; Tickstone; Tokarev; Topper; Ushkov; Vlassiev; Zarubin; Zabelsky; Zbrueva; Yaremitch.

Pochayev : Cathedral.

Pskov : Chapel on Bridge.

Simbirsk : Roerich Collection.

Schlusselburg : Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul.

Smolensk : Tenishev Municipal Art Museum.

Talashkino : Church of the Holy Spirit.

Tsarskoye-Selo : Grand Imperial Palace.

Ufa : Municipal Art Museum.
Viatka : Municipal Art Museum.
Voronezh : Palace of the Grand Duchess Olga.

SWEDEN

Stockholm : National Museum.
Private Collections : Arne; Bjork; Key; Mansson; Nobel; Palmstierna; Rubenstein; Schanzer; Sleptzov; Taube; Thiel; Wohlin.

SWITZERLAND

Geneva : Horvat Collection.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Baltimore, Mr. Mrs. John Garret.
Berkeley, Calif., California University; Mr. A. D. Kaun.
Boston : Private Collections : Mrs. Mary Munro Longyear; Mrs Mary Cabot Wheelwright; Mr. John Spaulding; Mr. Nathan Dole; Mr. Charles Pepper.
Buffalo, Ny : Private Collection : Mrs Cornelia Sage Quinton.
Burlingham, Cal : Private Collection : Mr. Jerome Landsfield.
Cambridge, Mass. : Widener Library, Harvard University.
Private Collection : Professor Charles R. Lanman.
Chicago, III. : Chicago Art Institute.
Private Collections : Mrs. John Alsen Carpenter; Mrs Coburn; Mr. Coini; Miss Cornelia Debey; Mr. Samuel Harper; Mr. Robert Harshe; Mr. V. Muratore; Mr. A. M. Volkoff.
Cleveland, Ohio. : Mrs. Cole Collection.
Denver, Colo. : Mr. Geo. Eggers Collection.
Detroit, Mich. : Detroit Art Institute; Mr. Clyde Burrows Collection.
Evansville, Ind. : Evansville Art Institute.
Honolulu : Miss Eleanor Castle Collection.
Kansas City, Mo. : Kansas Art Institute; Mrs Ethel Massey Holmes.

Milwaukee, Wis. : Mr. Dudley C. Watson Collection.

Minneapolis, Min. : Mrs. Maurice Flagg Collection.

New York, N. Y. ; Mr. A. Avinoff; Mrs. Arthur Bookman; Mr. Charles Crane; Mr. Muriel Draper; Mr. Ossip Dymov; Mr. Louis Horch; Miss. Frances Grant; Mr. S. Golding; Mrs. G. Isvolsky; Mr. Otto Kahn; Mrs. Nina Koshetz; Mr. Adolph Lewisohn; Mr. Maurice Lichtmann; Mrs. Thompson; Mr. A. Sack.

Oakland, Calif. : Oakland Art Association; Dr. William Porter Collection.

Omaha, Nebr. : Omaha Art Association.

Philadelphia, Pa. : Dr. Christian Brinton Collection.

San Francisco, Calif. : Senator J. Phelan ; Mrs. Salz; Mrs Rosenberg; Mr. J. Nolsen Laurvik.

Santa Fe, N. M. : Dr. Edgar Hewitt Collection.

Stanford, Calif. : Mrs. Hahn; Mrs. Roy Partridge.

Washington, D. C. : Mr. E. B. Hubrecht.

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NICHOLAS KONSTANTINOVITCH ROERICH
(1874)

Academician of the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts, Petrograd; Director of the School for the Encouragement of Fine Arts in Russia; Honorary President of the Council of Architecture for Women in Petrograd; Honorary Member of the Moscow Archaeological Institute; Professor of the Imperial Petrograd Archaeologigal Institute; Member of the Commission of the Fine Arts Editions of St. Eugenia, Petrograd; President of the Council of the Red Cross Art Workshops for Disabled Soldiers, Petrograd; Vice-President of the Council of Art in Russia; President of the Council of the Museum of Ante-Petrian Art, Petrograd; President of the Museum of Russian Art of the Society for the Encouragement of Fine Arts in Russia; Member of the Imperial Society of Architecture, Petrograd; Member of the Imperial Russian Archaeological Society, Petrograd; Commander of the First Class of the Royal Swedish Order of the North Star; Member of the Académie Nationale de Reims. Societaire of the Salon d'Automne, Paris; Member of the Société des Antiquaires de Paris; Member of the Société Prehistorique Paris; Honorary Member of the Vienna Secession; Member of the Finnish Artists Society of Helsingfors; Member Anglo-Russian Literary Society, London. Honorary Member Boston Art Club. Honorary President « Cor Ardens (Chicago) for Russia; Honorary President Master Institute of United Arts, (N. Y. C.); Honorary President « Corona Mundi » International Art Center. (N. Y. C.)

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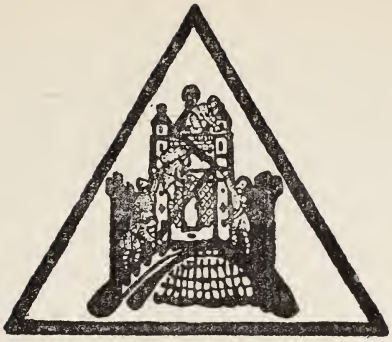

MASTER INSTITUTE

OF UNITED ARTS

Founded in New York, November 17, 1921

MUSIC — PAINTING — SCULPTURE
ARCHITECTURE — OPERA CLASS
BALLET — DRAMA — LECTURES

« Art will unify all humanity. Art is one—indivisible. Art has its many branches, yet all are one. Art is the manifestation of the coming synthesis. Art is for all. Everyone will enjoy true art. The gates of the « sacred source » must de wide open for everybody, and the light of art will influence numerous hearts with a new love. At first this feeling will be unconscious, but after all it will purify human consciousness, and how many young hearts are searching for something real and beautiful ! So, give it tol them. Bring art to the people—where it belongs. We should have not only museums, theatres, universities, public libraries, railway stations and hospitals, but even prisons decorated and beautified. Then we shall have no more prisons. »—«Paths of blessings »

310 Riverside Drive **New York, N.Y.**

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Yo de Manziarly

DRAMA

St. Clair Bayfield

Ossip Dymow

JOURNALISM

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Mathilde Trucco

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MASTER INSTITUTE OF UNITED ARTS

THE AIMS

It is with special cognizance of the needs of the American world of arts, that the Master Institute of United Arts was organized on November 17, 1921. Despite the present plenitude of schools it was felt that there was still needed one which would bring a new message to the legion of those seeking for Beauty and for a medium of creation. Primarily, the aim of the Master Institute of United Arts is to instill into its pupils an unswerving devotion to the highest ideals of art. It aims also to bring to youth a new inspiration for the unity of all arts. In the present turmoil men have learned that in art is to be found the one solace, the one bridge of understanding between all humanity. But if the arts would endure and gain strength; if they would accomplish their mission in the need of today's chaos, they must eschew partisanship and unite their forces. The Master Institute of United Arts is aiming to help the achievement of this ideal by imparting to the student not only a profound comprehension of his own medium of expression but also a respect and understanding of the crafts of his fellow artists. With such a broader aspect, we may strive towards that time when creators of all branches will join forces and battle side by side for the coming apotheosis of Art.

THE FACULTY

In the accomplishment of its aims the Master Institute of United Arts has had the privilege of enlisting a faculty of artists of broad vision and ideals. Each member of the staff has gained distinction in his respective art as well as in teaching, and perhaps no more representative list of instructors in all arts has ever been assembled in on staff.

STUDENT ADVANTAGES

The opportunities for general culture not possible in private or nome study are especially emphasized in the Master Institute of United Arts.

For the strengthening of the unity of the arts, and to further artistic intercourse between the various departments, the Master Institute provides for its students a series of lectures dealing with all arts. To these lectures all students enrolled in the Master Institute in any department, have the privilege of free attendance. The lectures will be given by some of the most eminent authorities and will deal with phases of music, painting, sculpture, architecture, drama and art criticism, literature and related subjects.

In addition to the lectures, the Master Institute will present during the year, exhibitions, productions and concerts by students and visiting artists.

By limiting the size of its classes, the Master Institute also assures each student of individual attention, and the essential personal relation between the student and teacher is constantly maintained.

Especial effort is made by the Master Institute to arouse the children in the various departments to creative expression. This is accomplished through group meetings and talks on Art to the children.

A NEW HOME

Within its short history the Master Institute of United Arts has made such strides in its enrollment and influence that a considerable increase in quarters has been found necessary. The Master Institute has now purchased a spacious permanent home at 310 Riverside Drive, which it will occupy at the beginning of the new term, Oct. 8, 1923. The unusual location of the house, as well as its splendid accommodations will give the students opportunity of working under the most inspiring conditions. The library, studios and recreation rooms will enable the student to spend his free hours at the Master Institute to excellent advantage.

Additional conveniences are assured in an Art and Music Shop where the student may purchase his supplies and music at the most reasonable prices. A Tea Room has also been established for the convenience of the students.

As the Master Institute of United Arts provides courses for students in all grades of advancement, no previous requirements are stipulated. Those students, however, who desire to enter advanced

courses, are required to show evidence of previous education or practice. In the case of students in music, this may be done through a hearing before members of the directorate and faculty and in the graphic arts, through examples of the student's work.

As the Master Institute maintains a high standard of scholarship and deportment, it is essential that every enrolled student adheres to the necessary qualifications.

CERTIFICATE OF THE SCHOOL

A Certificate of the Master Institute of United Arts will be granted to students in all departments who have satisfactorily completed the prescribed courses and have passed the requirements made by the directorate and faculty.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND PRIZES

Provision has been made for the granting of a number of scholarships. These are awarded competitively solely on the basis of merit, to those students who seem best endowed to take full advantage of the opportunity offered to them. In addition to the scholarships provided by the Master Institute, there will be the following special awards of merit.

Rabindra Nath Tagore Scholarship

An annual award to an advanced student in the school providing one year's tuition in painting.

Maurice Maeterlinck Scholarship

An annual award providing a year's tuition in the painting department.

Nicholas Roerich Scholarships

Two annual awards each providing a year's tuition in the music department.

Louis L. Horch Scholarship

An annual award providing one year's tuition in the piano department.

The Master Institute has also made provision to grant several prizes for the most noteworthy work done by the students during the school year. The Master Institute will also purchase for its permanent collection the best work done by a pupil in the painting and sculpture departments.

Through the co-operation of Corona Mundi, Inc., International Art Center, the Master Institute is enabled to award each year, to the most worthy students in each department, a work of art, aiming thereby to inspire the students to greater intimacy with creative works.

CONTEST

Under the auspices of Corona Mundi, Inc., the Master Institute of United Arts will hold several contests each year, to which students of the school as well as outsiders are eligible. For the ensuing year the contests planned are as follows:

Competition for the Best Song

To be written to the text either of a Psalm or one of the poems of Rabindra Nath Tagore, or one of the poems of Walt Whitman. Contest to close on Dec. 12, 1923.

Competition for a Costume Design

The Theme for the Design to be based on Atlantis. Contest to close March 9, 1924.

Details and conditions of each contest will be announced subsequently and may be had on application to the Master Institute of United Arts.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

Enrollments for the fall term will begin on September 15th, in all courses. The opening date for all courses is October 8th. Private instruction may be begun before or any time after that date by special arrangement.

The regular school session will last for thirty-five weeks, closing on June 7th. During the session the following holidays will be observed:

Thanksgiving Day	November 30
Christmas Vacation	December 22 to January 2
Lincoln's Birthday	February 12
Washington's Birthday	February 22
Spring Vacation	April 12-21

SUMMER SESSION

A summer session of six weeks will be held opening on June 25, 1924. This will include Elective, Master and Normal Classes, and private instruction in all subjects. Details of this work will be given in a later announcement.

TERMS OF ENROLLMENT

The Master Institute of United Arts is open to students of either sex and any age. All students entering the Master Institute do so with the distinct understanding that they will adhere to all regulations of the Master Institute and are expected to maintain the high standard set by the Institute.

Students may enroll any time during the school year.

It is understood that all students enrolling in October are enrolled for the entire season of 35 weeks and are liable for the full tuition. Those entering later in the year will be enrolled for the balance of the season.

No deductions are made for absences from lessons or for withdrawal before the close of the season. In the case of an absence where the cause is deemed sufficiently serious by the directorate and where notice shall have been given in writing at least twenty-four hours in advance of the time scheduled for the lesson, the lesson may be made up at the convenience of the teacher. No class work which is missed can be made up.

All tuition fees are payable in advance and are calculated for the entire season. For the convenience of the student, the Master Institute has arranged to have the payment of tuition made in three equal installments, the first due upon entrance, the second on January 4th and the third on March 21st. In courses where the fee is small, the entire tuition must be paid upon entrance. In the classes of Painting, Etching, Illustration and Sculpture, payments are made on a monthly basis.

All enrollments, arrangements for hours and payments must be made directly to the office.

For further information address the Executive Director.

310 Riverside Drive, New York City **Phones: Clarkson 0420-0421**

CORONA MUNDI

INC.

INTERNATIONAL ART CENTER

"HUMANITY IS FACING THE COMING EVENTS OF COSMIC GREATNESS. HUMANITY ALREADY REALIZES, THAT ALL OCCURENCES ARE NOT ACCIDENTAL. THE TIME FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF FUTURE CULTURE IS AT HAND. BEFORE OUR EYES THE REVALUATION OF VALUES IS BEING WITNESSED. AMIDST RUINS OF VALUELESS BANKNOTES, MANKIND HAS FOUND THE REAL VALUE OF THE WORLD'S SIGNIFICANCE. THE VALUES OF GREAT ART ARE VICTORIOUSLY TRAVERSING ALL STORMS OF EARTHLY COMMOTIONS. EVEN THE 'EARTHLY' PEOPLE ALREADY UNDERSTAND THE VITAL IMPORTANCE OF ACTIVE BEAUTY. AND WHEN WE PROCLAIM: LOVE, BEAUTY AND ACTION, WE KNOW VERILY, THAT WE PRONOUNCE THE FORMULA OF THE INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE. AND THIS FORMULA, WHICH NOW BELONGS TO THE MUSEUM AND STAGE MUST ENTER EVERY DAY LIFE. THE SIGN OF BEAUTY WILL OPEN ALL SACRED GATES. BENEATH THE SIGN OF BEAUTY WE WALK JOYFULLY. WITH BEAUTY WE CONQUER. THROUGH BEAUTY WE PRAY. IN BEAUTY WE ARE UNITED. AND NOW WE AFFIRM THESE WORDS — NOT ON THE SNOWY HEIGHTS, BUT AMIDST THE TURMOIL OF THE CITY. AND REALIZING THE PATH OF TRUE REALITY, WE GREET WITH A HAPPY SMILE THE FUTURE."

« BEAUTY AND WISDOM » JULY 11th 1922

THE OFFICERS

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BEAUTY-THE CONQUEROR!

A vital call at once idealistic and practical has brought into being CORONA MUNDI, Inc., as an international center of art. At the present time, art remains the one bond of understanding between nations, and the sole medium of friendly intercourse; for there are no nations in Art and Beauty has no enemies. Furthermore, at a moment when an unparalleled fluctuations has upset all existing standards of values; when foreign moneys have deteriorated in unprecedented manner, art objects alone have withstood the chaos and have in fact increased in intrinsic value. The experience of the last few years has established the uncontrovertible fact that the only true and unassailable Valuta rests in art.

In the light of these significant truths, it is certain that the time has come to spread among all peoples and classes a newer education—that of the practical as well as idealistic value of Beauty. Too long has art been held aloof; when men learn that Art is not a luxury, they will learn also to recognize its new applications in every day life.

The means of spreading this new gospel must come through some great co-operative organization which shall act as mediators in the newly destined interchange of art objects, and it is with this aim that CORONA MUNDI has been established. In its function CORONA MUNDI desires not only to enlist artists or collectors, but all intellectuals, all workmen, or students, and even the children —for it is these last who will be the creators of the coming culture. It is with this ideal in view that CORONA MUNDI has answered the call and has begun its existence dedicated to the truly practical vision of promoting the sense of Beauty among all peoples of every class, to create real friends of art among the masses, and to establish among all peoples that common language of understanding and relation—Art.

ITS AIMS

In the carrying out of its aims, as an International Art Center, CORONA MUNDI will pursue the following activities:

To hold exhibitions, and to arrange publications, productions, lectures and concerts.

To arrange touring and loan exhibitions, planning them in all kinds of galleries, factories and schools, even in hospitals, prisons, and in villages far from centers of art.

To buy and sell art treasures and act as agents for all types of art, on the most reasonable basis.

To assist Museums in the completion of their collections, through donations and subscriptions.

To organize artistic and archaeological research expeditions.

To establish agencies and branches in all foreign countries.

To catalogue and systematize collections; expertize and restore.

RŒRICH MUSEUM

Founded November 17, 1923

Open to public
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4, rue Tronchet, Paris (France)

Albert de LAPRADELLE,
Director.

George CHKLAVER,
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